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Items for discussion and decision: statistical capacity-building

Report of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its forty-first session (see E/2010/24, chap. I.A), the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century on statistical capacity-building, which is submitted to the Commission for information. The report outlines the efforts of the Partnership to promote the use of better statistics as a central part of the enabling environment for development progress, in particular through support to countries in the design, implementation and monitoring of national strategies for the development of statistics. The Commission is requested to take note of the report.

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Report of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century on statistical capacity-building

I. Introduction

1. The overall goal of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21) is to develop a culture of management for development results. The PARIS21 secretariat focuses its efforts on supporting developing countries in the design, implementation and monitoring of national strategies for the development of statistics in order to ensure, inter alia, nationally owned and produced data for all Millennium Development Goal indicators and development policy needs.[1]

II. Progress of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century in 2010

2. The PARIS21 secretariat supports national strategy processes primarily through the following activities: (a) facilitating the coordination of stakeholders to better address an evolving agenda; (b) advocating for increased involvement of national stakeholders in statistical development and enhancing the status of statistics in major international initiatives; (c) promoting better quality and effectively implemented national strategies; and (d) stimulating increased demand for and better use of data. Progress made in 2010 under these components is provided below.

A. Coordination

3. Since 2008, PARIS21 has conducted an annual exercise, the Partner Report on Support to Statistics, which gathers information from financial and technical partners on their support for statistical development. It is important to recognize the limitations of these data for the following reasons: not all donor support is captured in these exercises (especially where it is embedded in a broader sector programme), commitments are often estimated by dividing a project amount evenly across the project period, and double-counting is filtered out as much as possible but may still occur.

4. From the 2010 round of the Partner Report on Support to Statistics, covering active support for the period from 2008 to 2010, the following points emerged:[2]

- Africa received nearly half of the total support in terms of commitments. From 2008 to 2010, African countries and regional bodies received $716 million in commitments (45 per cent of global totals), while Asia received $488 million (31 per cent), Latin America and the Caribbean $135 million (8 per cent), and Europe $107 million (7 per cent). A further $151 million (9 per cent) was committed to global, non-country-specific projects and programmes.

[1] For a more detailed discussion of national strategies for the development of statistics, see E/CN.3/2005/18.

[2] Details and results available from www.paris21.org/PRESS2010/.

- Fifteen countries (Afghanistan, Albania, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Haiti, India, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sudan, Ukraine and United Republic of Tanzania) had estimated commitments exceeding $19.5 million per country. They combined to equal 45 per cent of total estimated commitments and 48 per cent of total country-specific commitments.

- Three donors (the European Commission, World Bank and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) provided 62 per cent of total commitments. Bilateral donors provided 37 per cent of all commitments, regional institutions 8 per cent, and international organizations 55 per cent.

- Commitments are considerably fragmented: more than one third of aid relationships in statistics (among the same 15 countries cited above) accounted for less than one twentieth of the financial aid committed to their statistical systems.

- Since the initial round of the Partner Report on Support to Statistics in 2008, global estimated commitments have risen by nearly 60 per cent (from approximately $1 billion to more than $1.6 billion in the 2010 round), although this increase may be due to a better response rate of donors.

- Since the 2008 round, the distribution of aid commitments to statistics seems to be shifting away from Africa. While the African continent remains the region with the highest proportion of commitments by far (45 per cent of global totals in 2010), its share has decreased steadily from the 2009 round (52 per cent) and 2008 round (59 per cent). This change has primarily been to the benefit of Asia, whose share has risen from 15 per cent in the 2008 round to 17 per cent in the 2009 round and to 31 per cent in the present round. The share for other regions has remained more or less level.

5. In accordance with the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the Accra Agenda for Action, and the Statistics for Results Facility, PARIS21 also supports country efforts in establishing national partnerships of stakeholders on statistics. The national partnership is intended to facilitate a better alignment of donor support for the national strategy implementation plan, increased mobilization of resources at the country level and use of more efficient and better coordinated funding arrangements for statistical development activities. The promotion and facilitation of such partnerships is an essential element of all missions to countries undertaken by the PARIS21 secretariat.

B. Advocacy

6. Among its 2010 advocacy activities, PARIS21 supported 17 countries throughout Africa, Asia and Latin America in producing booklets promoting their national statistical system and strategic planning processes and in organizing advocacy seminars or donor round tables. These countries are: Benin, Burundi, Cape Verde, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe. In addition, a regional booklet was produced in collaboration with the Andean Community secretariat. PARIS21 also delivered advocacy messages at relevant international and regional events.

C. National Strategies for the Development of Statistics

7. In 2010, PARIS21 organized the Meeting on Strategic Planning in Statistical Development for Fragile and Post-Conflict States in the margins of the forty-first session of the Statistical Commission and a regional workshop on national strategies in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community for Pacific island countries and territories. The Partnership secretariat directly supported the following 33 countries in national strategy processes (including mainstreaming agricultural statistical development in three countries), in conducting peer reviews and in preparing for participation at donor round tables: Benin, Bhutan, Burundi, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Mauritania, Mozambique, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Uganda, Viet Nam, Yemen and Zimbabwe. The Partnership secretariat also supported three regional entities in designing a regional statistical strategy: the East African Community, the Central American Economic and Social Community and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States.

8. In November 2010, PARIS21 produced a report on progress in designing and implementing national strategies in International Development Association borrower countries, lower-middle-income countries and all African countries.[3] The report reveals the following:

- Of the 79 International Development Association borrowers, 28 are currently designing or awaiting Government adoption of their national strategies. A further 35 are implementing their strategies. A total of 80 per cent are therefore currently engaged in a national strategy process. In Africa, 36 of the 40 countries on the continent are designing or implementing a statistical strategy.
- Of the 38 lower-middle-income countries and remaining African nations, 29 are designing or implementing strategies. Combining International Development Association and lower-middle-income countries, 79 per cent are therefore engaged in a national strategy process. A further 14 countries (12 per cent) either have no strategy or an expired one but are planning to design a national strategy.
- Of the 117 countries covered by the report, only 11 (9 per cent) are without a strategy and are not currently planning one. Most of these countries are the most vulnerable and include those in conflict situations or small island developing States.

D. Knowledge for statistics

9. The Partnership secretariat continues to co-manage and implement with the World Bank and other partners two key statistical programmes: the International Household Survey Network (www.ihsn.org) and the Accelerated Data Program (www.ihsn.org/adp).[4] Both have been very successful in improving data

[3] The progress report is available from www.paris21.org/nsds-status.

[4] For more information, see E/CN.3/2007/25.

archiving/dissemination and harmonizing survey programmes. The tools and methodologies that these two programmes offer to the Partnership have been instrumental in stimulating increased demand for and better use of data.

10. In 2010, the Accelerated Data Program provided technical and financial support in microdata documentation, archiving and dissemination in Palestine and the following 53 countries: Argentina, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Jordan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Saint Lucia, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Viet Nam and Zambia.

11. Sustainable capacity has been built in several countries that have considerably improved their microdata management practices and client orientation. The Economic and Statistical Observatory of Sub-Saharan Africa, the African Development Bank and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community are contributing to the implementation of the Accelerated Data Program in several countries. The Accelerated Data Program is also supporting a few countries in the assessment of survey data quality and harmonization/improvement of survey methods. Following pilot work undertaken in Cameroon with the Institute for Statistics of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and in Nigeria with the World Health Organization/United Nations Children's Fund Joint Monitoring Programme, the Accelerated Data Program is providing a more comprehensive approach in the establishment of national question banks in Cameroon and Ethiopia. Additional countries will likely join as demand for this type of activity is high.

12. In 2010, the activities of the International Household Survey Network have focused on: (a) the development and support of microdata management tools (software) and guidelines such as the Microdata Management Toolkit, Survey Management Toolkit, National Data Archive application, microdata anonymization tools, and question bank applications; and (b) the development of standards and guidelines such as the Data Documentation Initiative metadata standard, guidelines on question bank content, guidelines on the long-term preservation of digital data and metadata, a working paper on "The struggle for integration and harmonization", a working paper on "The Canada data liberation initiative", and guidelines on microdata dissemination policy. The International Household Survey Network tools and guidelines will continue to be updated and improved to respond to an ever growing demand.

III. Future directions of the Partnership's work

13. In addition to helping implement and monitor the Dakar Declaration on the Development of Statistics,[5] in 2011, PARIS21 will help to organize regional meetings and workshops, including the Fifth Forum on Statistical Capacity Building

[5] For more information on the Dakar Declaration for the Development of Statistics, see E/CN.3/2010/29.

for Arab Countries (Beirut, May 2011) and advocacy workshops for the Southern African Development Community, South-East Asia and Andean Community regions. PARIS21 will update the national strategy guidelines, enriching them with experiences gained in recent years. In order to better mainstream sectoral concerns in national strategies, the Partnership and UNESCO will also provide specific additional support in the development of education statistics to a number of African pilot countries. Support to country-level national strategies and regional-level activities will continue, and PARIS21 will conduct the 2011 round of the Partner Report on Support to Statistics.

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Items for discussion and decision: regional statistical development in Western Asia

Report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on regional statistical development in Western Asia

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its forty-first session (see E/2010/24, chap. I.A), the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on regional statistical development. It summarizes the challenges to and priorities for official statistics in the region in general and in specific subject matter areas. The paper further discusses issues of regional coordination, focusing in particular on the consistency of data published by national statistical offices and data published by international organizations. Specific points for discussion are suggested in paragraph 52.

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Report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on regional statistical development in Western Asia

I. Introduction

1. The Statistical Commission considers statistical development in the regions covered by the regional commissions of the United Nations on a rotating basis. The Commission decided, at its forty-first session, that it would discuss developments in the Western Asia region at its forty-second session.

2. The regional work programme for statistical development in the region is based on statistics for evidence-based policymaking. It is steered by the Statistical Committee of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and is executed by the Statistics Division of ESCWA. The membership of ESCWA is made up of 14 countries,[1] represented on the Statistical Committee of ESCWA by the heads of their national statistical offices. The Committee was established by ESCWA pursuant to resolution 179 (XVI) adopted at its sixteenth session. The Committee holds biennial sessions[2] to discuss strategic and programmatic issues, and elects its Bureau, composed of a Chair, two Vice-Chairs and a Rapporteur, from among the representatives of the members of the Committee, who are elected at each session and serve for a period of two years. In addition, the heads of the national statistical offices meet in February of each year, with a view to coming up with a regional position on the key issues for discussion and decision on the agenda of the Statistical Commission.

3. In order to support statistical development, ESCWA cooperates with other regional and international organizations that have a different concept for defining regions. Therefore, some of the activities concern the Arab countries (a region made up of 22 countries, including the 14 member countries of ESCWA, and Algeria, Comoros, Djibouti, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Somalia and Tunisia) or the so-called Middle East and North Africa region. Some of the technical cooperation projects, in particular projects included in the United Nations Development Account, are undertaken in cooperation with other regions that face the same technical issues in statistics.

4. On the occasion of its ninth session, in October 2010, the Statistical Committee launched a discussion aimed at establishing a midterm strategic vision for statistical development in the region. The strategy is to be finalized in the course of 2011, with an advanced draft expected in February 2011. Some elements of the strategy are reflected in the present document.

[1] The membership consists of Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

[2] The first session of the Statistical Committee was held in November 1995, with the subsequent sessions in February 1997, March 1999, April 2001, October 2002, October 2004, November 2006, October 2008 and October 2010.

II. Challenges to and priorities for statistical development in the Western Asia region

5. The priorities for official statistics in the region include the following:

(a) Implementing key methods and techniques for official statistics, such as national accounts;

(b) Harmonizing statistical databases;

(c) Capacity-building in various subject-matter areas, including poverty measurement and livelihood levels, population estimates, statistics on the informal sector, the trade in goods and in services, the environment, water, energy, agriculture, progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, labour and employment;

(d) Researching new methods for data collection, in particular administrative registers (including quality criteria for administrative registers used for statistical purposes);

(e) Advancing new approaches for the dissemination and communication of statistics;

(f) Defining national quality frameworks for official statistics;

(g) Expanding the utilization of geographic information systems for statistics;

(h) Unifying the classifications used at national statistical offices in the region.

6. The statistical cooperation between member countries should be utilized to a larger extent, and in particular, the transfer and exchange of expertise between ESCWA and other organizations active in the region should be facilitated. One way of achieving this may be intensifying technical cooperation with the United Nations and other international organizations active in statistics, in order to share the working methods and mechanisms of those organizations that specialize in statistical work.

III. Areas that are the primary focus of regional statistical development

A. Overview

7. With support from the Statistics Division, the objectives of the Statistical Committee include the following:

(a) To act as a centre of expertise and a forum for member countries of ESCWA to exchange views on statistical issues;

(b) To promote the exchange of expertise among member countries;

(c) To identify priorities and gaps in statistical capacity-building, by organizing and, where appropriate, coordinating capacity-building activities in cooperation with other regional and global organizations, including, but not limited

to, the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics, MEDSTAT (the Euro-Mediterranean Statistical Cooperation programme), the League of Arab States, the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries, the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, and the World Bank;

(d) To work in close cooperation with professional staff in the national statistical offices of member countries of ESCWA, in areas including data quality assurance and the implementation of international classifications and recommendations;

(e) To act as the steering body for subprogramme 5, Statistics for evidence-based policymaking, of programme 18, Economic and social development in Western Asia, of the strategic framework for the period 2012-2013 (see A/65/6 (Prog. 18)).

8. The statistical activities of ESCWA focus mainly on statistical capacity-building. ESCWA resolution 287 (XXV) concerns the strengthening of the statistical capacity of member countries of ESCWA for evidence-based policymaking. In that resolution, ESCWA was urged to produce indicators to assess regional progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, to adopt the common set of Core Information and Communications Technology Indicators issued by the global Partnership on Measuring Information and Communications Technology for Development and published by the International Telecommunication Union, and to make available the data related to those indicators for the review of strategic policies and workplans in areas of priority. The resolution calls upon member countries to accelerate the implementation of the System of National Accounts 1993 and its revisions, in order to enable policymakers to monitor economic changes and improve economic performance. Moreover, the resolution calls for the holding of training workshops on international concepts, classifications and standards.

9. The following sections of the present document bring particular issues regarding regional statistical development in Western Asia, in selected subject matter areas, to the attention of the Statistical Commission. These highlight areas of concern, mainly from the viewpoint of the Statistical Committee of ESCWA, as the main actor in regional statistics, and of the Statistics Division of ESCWA, as the implementing agency and facilitator. However, they also take into account the work of other actors, in particular those listed in paragraph 7 (c) above.

B. Implementation of the System of National Accounts

10. In the past few years, international organizations have held numerous technical workshops and high-level consultations to familiarize national accounts experts, users and policymakers with the System of National Accounts 2008 (2008 SNA) and to discuss the implementation strategy adopted by the Statistical Commission. At the regional level, events supported by ESCWA have included a regional workshop on national accounts, held in Cairo from 19 to 21 December 2006, an expert group meeting on national accounts, also held in Cairo, from 12 to 14 May 2009, a seminar on the implementation of the 2008 SNA in the Western Asia region, held in Muscat from 23 to 26 May 2010, and a high-level seminar on the implementation of the 2008 SNA in the countries of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (Gulf Cooperation Council), also held in Muscat, on 27 May 2010.

11. A survey of the status of implementation of the System of National Accounts in ESCWA member countries showed that there are a number of shortcomings and conceptual lapses in the compilation of national accounts in the region. The main issues to be addressed include:

(a) The incomplete coverage of national accounts in most member countries is, in most cases, the result of a lack of exhaustiveness of the accounts themselves. This relates to informal household units, but also extends to formal activities not adequately captured by traditional statistical survey instruments. The lack of updated business registers is also a common issue;

(b) Volume data: constant price estimates of production-side aggregates are mostly based on the consumer price index. The expenditure-side and income-side aggregates at constant prices are frequently not compiled. In many countries, the evaluation at current prices is also weak. In some cases, gross fixed capital formation is only estimated as an aggregated item. A true balancing process of the estimations from the different sides is seldom carried out;

(c) The household sector is not always appropriately defined for the compilation of the sequence of accounts;

(d) The Central Bank is not always treated as part of general Government;

(e) Expenditure on oil exploration is not included in capital formation or even in the value of output, although several Gulf countries have major oil reserves and consequently significant exploration activities;

(f) The reinvested earnings of foreign direct investment are not included in factor income from the rest of the world;

(g) Indirectly measured financial intermediation services are in most cases not allocated to the final users;

(h) Fixed asset consumption estimates are weak, generating problems in the estimation of gross and net values.

12. A series of actions should be undertaken in the medium term to improve the situation and accelerate the implementation process for the 2008 SNA. Some of the following activities are included in the work programme of the Statistics Division of ESCWA, while others are subject to the availability of external financial resources:

(a) Conducting regular annual assessments through questionnaires on national accounts and related economic statistics for the analysis of national statistical capacity and tracking progress made;

(b) Conducting missions to selected countries for initial assessment of national statistical capacity in national accounts and related economic statistics in the region;

(c) Organizing two subregional advocacy workshops (one for member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council and another for countries not members of the Council) to develop national strategic frameworks, inform stakeholders of the objectives of the project and raise funds;

(d) Conducting five regional training workshops during the time frame of the project for officials engaged in the fields covered (three on national accounts and two on related economic statistics);

(e) Conducting a regional training workshop on quality in national accounts and economic statistics;

(f) Organizing three regional expert group meetings on national accounts and related economic statistics;

(g) Providing financial support for five fellowships and study tours (once per year during the time frame of the project) on national accounts and related economic statistics, with a view to sharing best practice at the regional level;

(h) Providing facilitators for 28 technical assistance missions (two to each national statistical office in the region, each lasting five working days) on selected issues in national accounts and related economic statistics.

C. International Comparison Programme

13. The project proposal for the Western Asia region was prepared in early 2009. However, as the funds needed to launch the 2011 round of the International Comparison Programme were only transferred from the World Bank to ESCWA in June 2010, the secretariat was only able to conduct the first meeting for the launch of the 2011 round in the Western Asia region on 20 July 2010, in Beirut. The high-level meeting provided an opportunity for heads of national statistical offices, or their representatives, to meet and learn about developments in the new round of the programme and its governance structure, review and discuss the proposal and share views on national commitment and fund-raising strategies. The meeting also offered the opportunity for representatives to agree on the membership and structure of the Regional Executive Board of the International Comparison Programme for the 2011 round.

14. The meeting was followed by a two-day workshop, also held in Beirut, on 21 and 22 July 2010, attended by national coordinators for the International Comparison Programme, who have been assigned as programme focal points by each of the participating member countries. The workshop was the starting point for the official initiation of the 2011 round of implementation of the Programme in the ESCWA region. The second workshop for national coordinators took place from 4 to 7 October 2010 in Amman, and was organized in cooperation with the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics.

D. Other areas of economic statistics

15. The ESCWA work programme comprises activities related to trade statistics and industry statistics. In both areas, the work combines capacity-building activities and data collection and dissemination.

16. In the statistics on international trade, ESCWA completed a project under the Development Account on strengthening merchandise trade statistics. The recent considerations show that there is a need to move the focus towards the statistics on international trade in services. ESCWA cooperates with the World Trade Organization, the World Bank Institute and the League of Arab States in this effort, and publishes an annual bulletin on international trade statistics, based on the data collected from ESCWA member countries.

17. ESCWA cooperates with the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization on capacity-building activities and the collection and dissemination of data on industry statistics. As a result of this cooperation, ESCWA and the organization were able to relaunch the publishing of industry statistics for 22 Arab countries.

18. In the further development of industry statistics in the Western Asia region, attention should be paid to the exchange of experience and expertise in establishing and maintaining statistical business registers, as a sampling frame for business and economic surveys. The region would also benefit from a project aimed at putting in place short-term economic statistics that would allow member countries to obtain statistical evidence of the seasonal features of their national economies.

E. Demographic statistics, including population, migration and censuses

19. Population estimates represent a major challenge in the region. There are several issues related to this. One is the discrepancy between estimates at the national level and those published by the United Nations. Another is the lack of some data related to population and vital statistics, in particular the basic rates. To this end, ESCWA and the regional office of the United Nations Population Fund, in Cairo, agreed to combine their efforts in building the capacity of national statistical offices in producing basic data and population estimates.

20. At its sixth session, held in Beirut from 6 to 8 October 2004, the Statistical Committee of ESCWA established the Task Force on Population and Housing Censuses. The objective of the Task Force is to support regional implementation of the World Population and Housing Census Programme during the period from 2005 to 2010. The Task Force has held six meetings with the objectives of: (a) revising the Arabic translation of the Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses and its second revision, and making the necessary amendments; (b) addressing and discussing the role of the media in census-taking; (c) discussing the organization and conduct of city censuses; and (d) exchanging the relevant successful experiences and expertise among ESCWA member countries.

21. The Task Force proposed developing a regional programme for the 2020 round of population and housing censuses that, in addition to general capacity-building activities and exchange of expertise, would focus on the following tasks:

(a) To prepare a regional supplement to the Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses that reflects the specificities of the region and addresses its experience in census-taking, in particular with regard to the methodologies and technologies used;

(b) To focus on the census documentation process;

(c) To analyse and use data, and conduct analytical studies that serve as a basis for the development of policies and programmes in the public and private sectors;

(d) To prepare scientific studies on the techniques used in conducting censuses, improving the quality and diversifying the means of cooperation among

stakeholders, and request countries with vast experience in that area to undertake the preparation of training material and knowledge transfer to other member countries;

(e) To diversify data dissemination techniques, including the geographic information systems technology;

(f) To use census data in the preparation of population projections;

(g) To invite a group of international statistical organizations to attend all the Task Force meetings, with a view to benefiting directly from the knowledge and experiences of their representatives.

F. Social statistics and indicators

22. The work undertaken by ESCWA in the area of social statistics and indicators relates to capacity-building and to data collection and dissemination on labour, health, culture, education, housing, household budgets and youth.

23. One of the major challenges is in the area of labour statistics. Efforts should be made in ESCWA member countries to implement labour force surveys at regular intervals, possibly with a view to producing quarterly and/or monthly data, in order to capture the seasonal fluctuation of the labour markets. Other aspects of labour statistics should also be addressed, for example, the quality of employment and decent work. ESCWA organized training workshops in cooperation with the Arab Labour Organization and plans to organize a joint workshop for Arab countries in cooperation with the International Labour Organization. The workshop would hopefully lead to longer term cooperation on sustainable capacity-building.

G. Gender statistics

24. ESCWA resolution 286 (XXV) concerned the strengthening of the capacity of ESCWA member countries to produce gender statistics for equality and empowerment of women, which are needed for planning and policymaking. The resolution calls upon member countries to adopt the set of indicators contained in the Arab Gender Issues and Indicators Framework and to produce statistics to be used for the monitoring and evaluation of strategic policies and workplans and to develop a mechanism for the collection, dissemination and analysis of gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated demographic data. It further encourages member countries to formulate and implement training programmes to incorporate gender indicators into their statistical systems, with a view to educating data producers and users about issues related to gender equality. In that resolution, ESCWA is requested to provide technical support to member countries in the form of advisory services and workshops, and to assist member countries in integrating a gender perspective into national strategies for the development of statistics and national statistical system plans of action.

25. ESCWA has developed the first Arab gender statistics database, entitled Arab GenInfo_09, which was launched at the second inter-agency and expert group meeting on gender statistics in the Arab region, held in Beirut from 12 to 14 October 2009. The secretariat plans to extend the database to include indicators on violence against women, in order to enable it to serve as an observatory for monitoring gender issues in member countries. ESCWA also prepared an initial draft of its

manual on the definitions, terms and methodologies used in gender statistics and the Arabic-English glossary on statistical terms on gender issues.

26. ESCWA has a role in ensuring that the cultural issues specific to the region are reflected in recommendations and guidelines. One of the examples is the adaptation of questionnaires on violence against women. The original questionnaire comprised questions that touched on culturally sensitive issues and had to be reformulated.

H. Environment statistics and accounting

27. ESCWA enhanced the capacity of officials to adopt international standards in energy and environment statistics, including by promoting the System of Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting, which will become an international standard in 2012. In particular, ESCWA presented the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting for Water at a meeting of the Arab Ministerial Council for Water, and enlarged the geographical scope to the Arab region, covering 22 countries, in cooperation with the League of Arab States.

28. One of the specific aspects of environmental issues in the Western Asia region is a focus on water resources and the official statistics have to follow this priority. Therefore, the statistical work programmes have a specific section devoted to statistics on water.

29. Future work on environmental and water statistics in the ESCWA region should move towards the use of geographical information systems. Such systems may comprise data on small areas, land use and land cover, environmental indicators and indicators specific to water.

I. Energy statistics

30. ESCWA member countries were involved in the review of the Energy Statistics Manual, a publication compiled by the International Energy Agency of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat), which has been translated into Arabic. ESCWA, in a further example of a coordinated approach to data collection from member countries, participates in the joint data collection on energy statistics, led by the International Energy Agency.

31. In the coming period ESCWA will execute a project, under the auspices of the Development Account, aimed at developing capacity for the collection and compilation of energy statistics and balances. It aims to tackle challenges of environmental statistics in the region, namely the harmonization of measurements and the completeness of energy statistics.

J. Measuring development

32. The Statistical Committee of ESCWA, at its ninth session, in October 2010, discussed a progress report on monitoring efforts to achieve the Millennium

Development Goals.[3] The report reveals significant advances made by the ESCWA member countries in reporting on their work towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, with a 17 per cent increase in data availability since 2008. However, there are still some issues that persist in this area. Major differences exist between data reported by national and international sources. In 2010, in 15 per cent of cases (compared with 18 per cent of cases in 2008), the values reported both nationally and in the database of the Statistics Division, for the same indicator in the same year for a given country, matched exactly. A further 27 per cent of data points in 2010 (compared with 39 per cent in 2008), were consistent in value (with a positive or negative differential of 10 per cent) in both sources. By contrast, there were major discrepancies (differentials of over 10 per cent) in 58 per cent of data points in 2010, compared with 43 per cent in 2008. The Statistical Committee of ESCWA requested the Statistics Division of ESCWA to address this alarming situation, to defend the data emanating from national official statistics and to work with other organizations towards decreasing the discrepancies.

33. ESCWA is a partner in the Global Project on "Measuring the Progress of Societies" and a member of its board. As part of its activities in this field, ESCWA was represented at the third OECD World Forum on the theme "Statistics, Knowledge and Policy", held in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 27 to 30 October 2009 and gave a presentation on the role of statistical monitoring in times of crisis. In addition, the secretariat offered financial support to member countries eligible for such funding in order to enable them to participate in the Forum. ESCWA and OECD have made joint efforts towards fund-raising for regional implementation of the Global Project and during the Forum the Executive Secretary of ESCWA and the Secretary-General of OECD signed a memorandum of understanding on future cooperation between the two organizations in this area.

34. ESCWA cooperated with the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics on the preparation of the first meeting of the steering committee and the workshop on progress of societies, held in Amman on 3 and 4 October 2009, and also organized the first coordinators' workshop on measuring the well-being and progress of Arab societies, held in Beirut from 1 to 5 November 2010.

IV. Challenges to regional statistical coordination

35. The various regional organizations active in Western Asia have different concepts of the region, including the geographical concept used by the United Nations, the concept of an "Arab region" or the concept of a group of Islamic countries, and some organizations also use the concept of the Middle East and North Africa. The regional organizations active in statistics are: ESCWA, the League of Arab States and its specialized agencies, the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics, the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries, the Islamic Development Bank and MEDSTAT.

36. Bearing in mind the geographical and cultural proximity, ESCWA coordinates with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and its subregional office for North Africa on statistical activities for Arab countries.

[3] See E/ESCWA/SD/2010/IG.1/9 for more information.

37. The following organizations working at the global level are also actors in regional statistical coordination and cooperation in Western Asia: the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, principally through its Statistics Division; the International Monetary Fund; the World Bank; and the specialized agencies of the United Nations, both at Headquarters and through their regional offices.

38. Challenges related to the coordination of statistical activities in the region have several layers. The first is the necessity, for all actors in official statistics in the region, of producing consistent data. This is important for fostering trust and confidence in official statistics. The national statistical offices in Western Asia have repeatedly expressed their concern about the lack of coordination that leads to a high reporting burden, as well as important discrepancies between data disseminated by various international and regional organizations. In particular, they expect that ESCWA will lead the coordination of efforts in the region.

39. The second is capacity-building in statistics. This is the major responsibility of the organizations listed in paragraphs 35 and 37 towards the national statistical offices. Resource allocation does not allow any of those organizations, individually, to cover all requirements for the transfer of expertise and capacity-building. A combined effort would allow for greater efficiency, avoid duplication and cover existing gaps. Taking into account the language issues, it appears reasonable to consider combined workshops for all Arab countries. In this respect, cooperation between ECA and ESCWA and with the League of Arab States is a logical core from which to build a statistical coordination mechanism in the region.

40. International and regional organizations should assist member countries in establishing coordinating mechanisms between the statistical departments of their various ministries and central statistical offices in order to achieve statistical integration and obtain accurate and consistent statistical results and information. In other words, the international organizations should respect the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and the role of statistical offices in the national coordination of official statistics, by including the national statistical offices in their activities and avoiding shortcuts in data collection. The reporting burden for member countries and inconsistencies in data collection, owing to the lack of coordination between international organizations in the structure and time frame of their surveys, persist as major issues in the region.

V. Institution-building of official statistics in the region

41. ESCWA resolution 283 (XXV) calls on member countries to take all necessary measures to produce high-quality official statistics for use in international comparisons. Such measures include applying international concepts, classifications and standards, adopting and applying the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, ensuring the credibility, impartiality and autonomy of statistical institutions and enhancing the credibility of statistics at the national, regional and international levels. The resolution also asks member countries to complete the design and implementation of national strategies for statistical development in accordance with the general orientations issued by the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century. The resolution appeals for the enhancement of the position of the national statistical machinery within the national institutional

structure and the strengthening of the structural factors that are connected to the legislative framework and regulatory arrangements.

42. The monitoring of the implementation of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics shows that most of the ESCWA member countries implemented at least six to eight of the Fundamental Principles, with three countries reporting full compliance with the Fundamental Principles.[4] This is an encouraging result, given that the implementation of the Fundamental Principles depends on many factors external to the statistical systems.

43. Of the 14 ESCWA member countries, 10 have completed their national strategies for the development of statistics, with two additional countries in the process of approval of their strategies. The strategies are available from the ESCWA website.

44. The ESCWA Statistical Committee has stressed the importance of the data dissemination standards set by the International Monetary Fund. Several ESCWA member countries are compliant with the conditions of the Special Data Dissemination Standard, namely Bahrain (as of 29 August 2008), Iraq (as of 15 December 2009), Jordan (as of 28 January 2010) and the United Arab Emirates (as of 31 July 2008).

VI. Ways forward

45. Future regional statistical work in the ESCWA region should support the further development of national statistical systems. The Statistical Committee of ESCWA made the following recommendations at its ninth session, in October 2010:

(a) A primary role of ESCWA should be to provide expertise to member countries through the core staff of the Statistics Division, regional advisers and consultants. The Statistics Division should create a team that will manage statistical training and the tracking of technical assistance requests;

(b) It is necessary to prioritize with respect to available resources. ESCWA should identify and cover the most common needs of national statistical systems;

(c) The training of trainers should be a leading approach, to ensure that the knowledge acquired through training programmes, seminars and workshops is further spread in national statistical offices. This would also ensure that the knowledge is not lost in the case of changes in staff;

(d) The member countries of ESCWA demand more focus on new statistical methods and techniques. This includes the use of administrative registers and records as a source of statistical data, geographical information systems and taking advantage of new technologies;

(e) ESCWA is called upon to assist member countries in building and strengthening their national statistical systems, in particular with respect to statistical legislation and statistical infrastructure in line with the implementation of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics;

[4] For more details and further information related to the implementation of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics in Western Asia, see the ESCWA Virtual Library at www.escwa.un.org/divisions/scu/themes/main.asp?ID=6.

(f) A specific focus of the ESCWA region should include attention to the development of statistics in countries and areas stricken by conflicts.

46. The quality of statistical data disseminated by international organizations is of great concern to the member countries of ESCWA. There is a persistent problem that these data differ significantly from data disseminated by national statistical offices. Reasons for these discrepancies are not always obvious. National statistical offices also feel a significant burden owing to the numerous statistical questionnaires received from international organizations. In order to address this issue, ESCWA proposes that:

(a) ESCWA should focus its data work (for the purposes of its publications) on the direct collection of data from member countries. Results of this data collection should be stored and made available to other users (including other international organizations) in a data bank maintained by ESCWA;

(b) The Statistics Division of ESCWA should intensify coordination in data collection. Firstly, it should consolidate and coordinate all data requests emanating from ESCWA. Secondly, when sending statistical questionnaires, ESCWA should always keep national statistical offices involved, including in cases when data are produced by other ministries or Government agencies. Finally, ESCWA should actively promote the use of questionnaires to be shared with other international organizations (primarily organizations of the United Nations system) in order to diminish the response burden and to improve the consistency of data requests.

47. Members of the Statistical Committee of ESCWA are currently in discussions on the strategic vision for statistical work in the region in the five-year period to 2016.

Proposed operating mode of the Statistical Committee of ESCWA

48. The following principles reflect the operating mode of the Statistical Committee as it is currently formulated, with the addition, in subsequent paragraphs, of a number of recommendations offered with a view to making the statistical work programme of ESCWA more systematic and more closely focused on broad statistical areas, rather than on individual outputs. The Statistical Committee will further elaborate on this proposal as part of ongoing discussions. The principles are:

(a) The Statistical Committee meets once every two years, in the month of October in even-numbered years;

(b) The Bureau of the Statistical Committee may initiate written consultation with member countries on issues that it deems to be of importance;

(c) The Working Group of the Statistical Committee meets once a year in February, prior to the session of the Statistical Commission, with the major objective of coordinating the regional position on issues to be discussed at the session of the Commission;

(d) Permanent teams or groups of experts will ensure the sustainability of statistical capacity-building. Their role will be to follow up developments in statistical areas, both within ESCWA and globally, prepare recommendations and advise the Statistical Committee, its Bureau and Working Group.

49. There should be a small number of permanent teams or groups of experts. Members of each team or group should be delegated by national statistical offices, and the Statistics Division at ESCWA should assign a staff member to each team or group as a facilitator. The membership may also include external experts with advanced knowledge in the subject matter. The teams or groups will follow matters in their respective areas, facilitating the exchange of knowledge and experience, ensuring that links with such global groups as the Statistical Division city groups are maintained, and making expert recommendations to the Statistical Committee and its Working Group. Such recommendations may include the adoption of common positions with regard to the Statistical Commission, suggestions for workshop programmes and the ongoing maintenance of online content on best practice.

50. The creation and dissolution of the groups should be subject to approval by the Committee and the Bureau. Drawing on experience from other regions, it may be wise to restrict the number of groups to the main strategic areas in order to keep them optimally manageable.

51. The groups should have clear mandates and terms of reference, which should be periodically reviewed by the Committee. At the time of writing the present report, the strategic vision was still in discussion. The final list of groups may, therefore, be slightly different from the following proposal:

(a) National accounts (as a major statistical issue, the implementation of SNA 2008 arguably warrants a specific group);

(b) Economic statistics, other than national accounts;

(c) Social statistics, including the work of the Task Force on Population and Housing Censuses;

(d) Statistics on employment;

(e) Environment, water and energy statistics;

(f) Gender statistics, including the work of the Task Force on Gender Statistics;

(g) New and innovative methods and techniques in statistics, including the use of administrative records and registers and geographical information systems.

VII. Action to be taken by the Statistical Commission

52. The Commission may wish to:

(a) Comment on the issues of statistical development in individual subject matter areas highlighted in section III of the present document;

(b) Provide guidance on strengthening regional statistical cooperation, taking into account the challenges listed in section IV;

(c) Comment on the measures taken by the countries of Western Asia with respect to the institution-building of official statistics in the region, outlined in section V;

(d) Advise on the challenge of creating a regional strategy among the countries of Western Asia to further the development of statistics, in particular proposals outlined in section VI;

(e) Make suggestions concerning the operation of the working groups.

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Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Items for information: population and housing censuses

Population and housing censuses

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report was prepared at the request of the Statistical Commission at its forty-first session (see E/2010/24, chap. I.A). As 2010 marks the mid-decade of the 2010 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses, this report contains information on the activities completed since 2005 in respect of the implementation of the 2010 World Programme, including the preparation and dissemination of international census guidelines; conduct of training workshops; technical assistance; and development and maintenance of a website to serve as a census knowledge base. It also contains information on future activities related to the 2010 World Programme. The Commission is invited to take note of the report.

* E/CN.3/2011/1

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I. Introduction

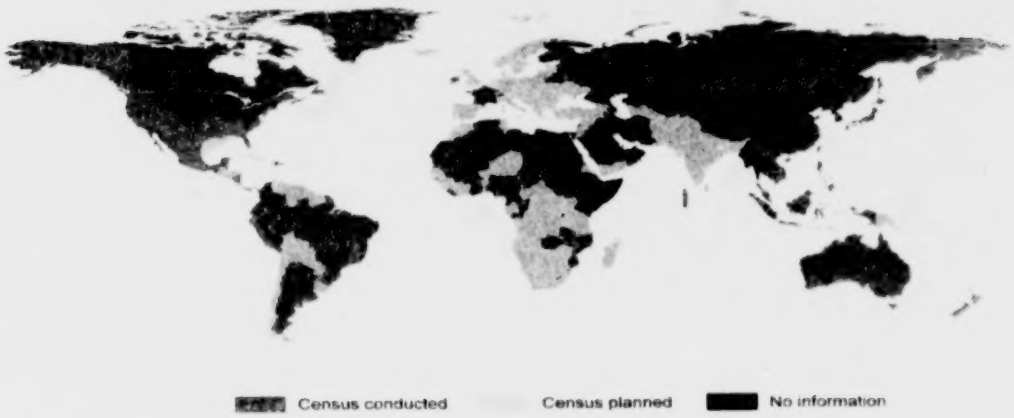
1. At its thirty-eighth session (see E/2007/24), the Statistical Commission requested the United Nations Statistics Division and other international agencies to increase their technical assistance to national statistical offices in order to strengthen national capacity for the implementation of the 2010 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses. In addition, the Commission requested countries to begin implementation of the revised *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*.

II. National implementation of the 2010 round of population and housing censuses

2. The 2010 round of population and housing censuses spans the period from 2005 to 2014. Throughout the census round, the Division closely monitors and regularly updates information on censuses already taken as well as on those that are planned and those that are postponed. According to the information available to the Division as at the end of 2010, which marks the mid-decade of the 2010 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses, 121 countries or areas have already undertaken a census. These censuses have enumerated an estimated 58 per cent of the world's population. In 2010 alone, 43 countries or areas — consisting of 6 countries in Africa, 13 in Asia, 4 in Europe, 14 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2 in Northern America and 4 in Oceania — have conducted a census.

3. Since 2005, several countries have rescheduled their censuses at least once. For instance, over the past year, 17 countries or areas that had previously announced that they would conduct their national census in 2010 have deferred their census dates to 2011. Based on initial scheduling and reporting by countries, the year 2010 had been expected to be the peak census year for the 2010 census round. However, as a consequence of postponements, the peak census year has now shifted to 2011, where a census is scheduled to be held in 73 countries or areas. The reasons for the postponement of census dates include budgetary constraints, technical issues, lack of skilled staff and political reasons. In 2012, 17 countries or areas have scheduled to conduct a census. By the end of the census round, it is estimated that 98 per cent of the world's population will have been counted. Information on census dates is set out in annex I to the present report.

Implementation of the 2010 round of population and housing censuses



III. Activities of the 2010 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses

4. In line with the mandate to assist countries to conduct a census during the 2010 census round, the Division carried out a variety of activities aimed at enhancing national implementation of the 2010 World Programme. Throughout the reporting period, the Division continued to develop international census guidelines, including handbooks and technical reports; developed the software package, CensusInfo, to help countries disseminate census data; organized training workshops on international guidelines for population and housing censuses, census management, cartography, data capture, analysis and dissemination of census data, and census evaluation; maintained a census resource centre; and published several issues of the web-based 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme Newsletter.

5. In the implementation of the 2010 World Programme, the Division continued to work closely with the World Bank as well as with the Government of Italy. The Division also closely collaborates with United Nations regional commissions and international agencies.

A. International census guidelines

6. The Division played a pivotal role in the development of international recommendations for the 2010 round of censuses. The Division has published technical guidelines, primarily, the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 2* (2007) and its supplementary handbooks and technical reports focusing on specific census topics. Approved by the Statistical Commission at its thirty-eighth session, the second revision of the *Principles and Recommendations* presents international guidelines for use by countries in planning and conducting their censuses. The handbooks and technical reports issued by the Division to date are described below. The online version of each publication,

together with currently available translations into the other five official languages of the United Nations, is available on the Division's website from: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/census3.htm.

7. The *Handbook on Population and Housing Census Editing, Revision 1* (2010) provides countries with a broad overview of census and survey data editing methodology and information on the use of various approaches to census editing. It also reviews the advantages and disadvantages of manual and computer-assisted editing. The Handbook is a reference for both subject-matter and data-processing specialists as they work as teams to develop editing specifications and programmes for censuses and surveys.

8. The technical report entitled "Post-enumeration surveys: operational guidelines" (2010) presents operational guidelines for the preparation and implementation of a post-enumeration survey. It provides census organizations with guidelines, methods and best practices for conducting census evaluation, which is important to provide users with a level of confidence when utilizing census data and to build public trust in the national statistical system. It defines and elaborates the objectives of a post-enumeration survey and covers the major elements involved in its design, planning and implementation, and presents the challenges associated with its successful implementation and how they can be mitigated.

9. The *Handbook on Geospatial Infrastructure in Support of Census Activities* (2009) provides census planners and related personnel with technical guidelines on contemporary methods, tools and best practices for application in census-mapping operations. It takes into account recent technological developments in the geographic information area with regard to geospatial technologies and to approaches in the use of geospatial applications for statistical purposes, including population and housing censuses.

10. The *Handbook on Measuring the Economically Active Population and Related Characteristics in Population Censuses* (2009) provides census planners with a variety of approaches to assess the questions and methods of collecting economic characteristics used in their national census. The Handbook provides suggestions on the implementation of guidelines on the measurement of economic characteristics in population censuses contained in the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 2*.

11. The technical report entitled "Census data capture methodology" (2009) introduces various technical options available for data capture and explains how each method can be applied. The report was produced based on the information that was presented and collected during a series of workshops on census data processing conducted in 2008.

B. Training workshops

12. In pursuance of its commitment to strengthen capacity for planning and carrying out population and housing censuses and in collaboration with regional commissions and subregional organizations, the Division has conducted 33 workshops, of which 25 were regional and 8 national, on major phases and aspects of a census operation for the period 2006-2010. About one thousand participants from over 140 countries and areas were trained in these workshops. The

workshops focused on international guidelines for population and housing censuses, census management, cartography, data capture and processing, data analysis, data evaluation and dissemination.

Census evaluation

13. The Division conducted five regional workshops on census evaluation in 2009 and 2010. A total of 124 participants from 85 countries were trained in these workshops. The purpose of the workshops was to present an overview of the various methods of evaluating censuses with a focus on the post-enumeration survey methodology. The workshops also offered an opportunity for the participants to present and discuss the experience of their countries on different aspects of census evaluation and the post-enumeration survey. The workshops were held in: (a) Amman, from 21 to 24 November 2010, for Arabic speaking countries; (b) Bangkok, from 10 to 14 May 2010, for Asian countries; (c) Tunis, from 7 to 11 December 2009, for French-speaking African countries; (d) Addis Ababa, from 14 to 18 September 2009, for English-speaking African countries; and (e) Asunción, from 3 to 7 August 2009, for Latin American countries.

Census data dissemination

14. Two regional seminars were organized in 2010 on strategies and technologies for census data dissemination. The seminars were attended by 71 participants from 49 countries. The seminars were organized with the aim of providing a forum for sharing national practices and experiences in the dissemination and use of census data. The seminars reviewed emerging trends, innovative approaches and technological tools employed in the dissemination of census data. The seminars were held in Nairobi, from 14 to 17 September 2010, for both English- and French-speaking African countries; and in Bangkok, from 5 to 8 October 2010, for Asian countries.

15. The Division also organized regional as well as national training workshops on CensusInfo, a free software package for disseminating census data on CD-ROM and on the Internet developed by the Division, in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The workshops offered hands-on experience on the software. The three regional workshops, which trained 69 census data managers from 56 countries, were held in: (a) Georgetown, from 12 to 15 October 2009, for the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries; (b) Maputo, from 10 to 13 November 2009, for English-speaking African countries; and (c) Bamako, from 30 November to 4 December 2009, for French-speaking African countries. The Division also conducted the following national in-house training sessions in four countries on the implementation of the CensusInfo software: (a) Liberia, from 26 to 30 October 2009, for 11 staff of the Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services; (b) Mozambique, from 16 to 20 November 2009, for 14 staff of the Instituto Nacional de Estatística; (c) Egypt, from 2 to 6 May 2010, 20 to 23 September 2010 and 11 to 13 October 2010, for 49 participants from the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics; and (d) Malawi, from 29 November to 3 December 2010, for 10 staff of the National Statistical Office of Malawi. Egypt, Liberia and the Occupied Palestinian Territory have successfully adapted CensusInfo for disseminating data from their most recent population and housing censuses. A CensusInfo adaptation for Malawi is presently under development.

Census data analysis

16. The Division conducted two in-house seminars to strengthen national capacity to analyse, present and disseminate census data for evidence-based policymaking. The seminars were held in: (a) Blantyre, Malawi, from 19 to 22 July 2010, for 19 staff of the National Statistical Office of Malawi; and (b) Cairo, from 17 to 19 May 2010, for 49 staff of the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics. The main objective of the seminars was to facilitate a deeper exploration of census data to produce analytical and thematic reports. The Malawi seminar had a focus on the analysis of fertility data and on the development of nuptiality and fertility indices, while that of Egypt centred on methods for population projection, gender analyses and constructing composite indices, including a wealth index. The Division is working with the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia to assess its needs and identify priority areas of in-depth analysis of its 2007 population and housing census data.

Census data capture and data editing

17. In 2010, with the support of the Division, a regional workshop on census data editing was organized by the CARICOM secretariat in Saint John's from 6 to 11 December 2010. The purpose of the workshop was to develop the capacity of the staff of the national statistical offices of the CARICOM member countries with the techniques and procedures used in editing census data. The workshop was attended by more than 40 participants from 15 countries. In 2008, four regional workshops were organized by the Division on census data processing, focusing on contemporary technologies for data capture and the methodology and practice of data editing. The objective of the workshops was to highlight the capabilities of contemporary technologies and their use for census data capture and editing and to facilitate the exchange of national experiences. The workshops, which trained 136 census practitioners from 68 countries, were held in: (a) Bamako, from 3 to 7 November 2008, for French-speaking African countries; (b) Bangkok, from 15 to 19 September 2008, for Asian countries; (c) Dar-es-Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, from 9 to 13 June 2008, for English-speaking African countries; (d) Doha, from 18 to 22 May 2008, for the countries of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia region.

Census management and cartography

18. The Division organized seven regional workshops on census management and cartography in 2007 and 2008. Organized in collaboration with relevant regional and subregional organizations, the workshops trained 224 staff from 104 countries across the world. The main purpose of the workshops was to emphasize the importance of good census management and to highlight the evolving capabilities of geographic information systems and other geospatial technologies that could be used in censuses. The workshops covered such census activities as delineation of enumeration areas, data collection, and analysis and dissemination of census information. The workshops were held in: (a) Zambia, from 8 to 12 October 2007, for English-speaking African countries; (b) Thailand, from 15 to 19 October 2007, for Asian countries; (c) Trinidad and Tobago, from 22 to 26 October 2007, for Caribbean countries; (d) Morocco, from 12 to 16 November 2007, for French-speaking African countries; (e) New Caledonia, from 4 to 8 February 2008, for

countries of the Pacific region;[1] (f) Chile, from 24 to 27 November 2008, for Latin American countries; and (g) Belarus, from 8 to 12 December 2008, for the member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States.[2]

International guidelines

19. The Division organized three regional workshops to introduce the revised international guidelines contained in the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 2*. The workshops informed the participants of the process of selection of census topics, relevant questions and required outputs. They also discussed national preparations with a view to identifying components of the population and housing censuses that are most vulnerable and in need of strengthening. The workshops also provided an opportunity to address ways of instituting and fostering regional cooperation in conducting population and housing censuses. The workshops, attended by 188 participants from 64 countries, were held in: (a) Mali, from 6 to 9 November 2006, for French-speaking African countries; (b) Mozambique, from 30 October to 2 November 2006, for English-speaking African countries; and (c) Cambodia, from 31 July to 2 August 2006, for Association of Southeast Asian Nations countries.

C. Technical assistance

20. The Division provides, upon request, technical support to developing countries for strengthening national capacity for census-taking. In 2010, the Division directly provided or sponsored the following technical assistance: (a) undertook an advisory mission to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics to provide support for the preparatory activities for the 2011 census, in particular, to review and assess the questionnaire design, the training materials and manuals and the plans for data processing, and to evaluate the objectives and procedures of the planned post-enumeration survey; (b) arranged a study visit for the staff of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics to learn from the experiences of the Office for National Statistics of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on census evaluation, focusing on the various aspects of the post-enumeration survey, including design, implementation, automated matching system and calculation of the estimates of coverage rates; (c) provided expert support to the Central Statistics Office of Mauritius as it prepared to undertake its 2011 population and housing census in the area of data capturing and processing using scanning devices and with respect to improvements to be made to office and field operations, including a tracking system for questionnaires; and (d) provided expert support to the Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Informática of Peru by assessing its 2005 census plans in order to establish a continuous survey thereafter.

21. The Director of the Division co-chairs the Iraq Census International Technical Advisory Board. The mandate of the Advisory Board is to provide expertise of nationally and internationally recognized experts to assist the Iraqi Government in its endeavour to conduct a population and housing census in compliance with international standards.

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[1] Additionally, the workshop covered the topics of international guidelines for conducting population and housing censuses, regional cooperation and technologies for data capture.

[2] The workshop also covered the topic of census data capture.

D. 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme website

22. Since the beginning of the 2010 census round, the Division has maintained the website of the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/census2010.htm). This website presents updated information available on census-related activities across the world: news about country activities related to census-taking; information on the progress of implementation of the 2010 census round, including through a "census clock" that tallies the total number of countries or areas that have conducted a census and the proportion of the estimated world's population enumerated by a census in the 2010 round; announcements on the release of census-related publications and organization of meetings and workshops by the Division and other organizations of the United Nations system. The website offers access to questionnaires and publicity materials used in national censuses. It also provides regularly updated information on the actual and expected dates for the 2010 round of censuses in every country or area.

23. One of the important features of the website is the Census Knowledge Base, which serves as a repository of census methodology guidelines and documents pertaining to country best practices in census-taking. To date, the Census Knowledge Base contains more than 387 documents.

24. As part of its effort to promote the exchange of information on census activities, the Division publishes the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme Newsletter, which is available at the website. The periodic newsletter provides a synopsis of recent developments, events and census-taking activities related to the 2010 census round.

E. Assessment of census methodology used by countries

25. The Division launched an initiative to collect information on methodologies used by countries at each phase of their 2010 round census. The major objectives of the initiative were: (a) to assess the requirements of countries in terms of new technologies and the expertise required from external sources; (b) to identify those countries that can provide technical support to others and, in particular, to foster South-South cooperation; and (c) to collect information that can provide a basis for better serving the needs of countries intending to conduct a census in the remaining period of the 2010 round. More specifically, the Division requested from national statistical offices information on completed and planned census activities over the years of the round, focusing on methodologies used by countries during the 2010 census round, including on cartography, method of enumeration, data processing, evaluation, dissemination, and technical assistance needs and offerings. One hundred and thirty-eight countries completed the questionnaire. On the basis of the information collected, a report has been prepared to serve as a background document of the Statistical Commission. It will also be posted on the website of the Census Knowledge Base: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/census2010.htm. The highlights of the analysis are given in annex II to the present report.

IV. Future activities

26. The major goal of the 2010 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses is to ensure that all countries and areas conduct a population and housing census at least once in the decade 2005-2014. By the end of 2010, 121 countries or areas would have already undertaken a census (see annex I). The focus of many of these countries as well as those that are about to conduct a census has shifted to census data analysis, dissemination and archiving. This was confirmed by the questionnaire sent by the Division to countries in 2009 (see paragraph 25). For 2011 and later years, the Division envisages a range of census-related activities, including those listed below.

Monitoring and documenting country activities related to censuses

27. As part of the activities related to the 2010 World Programme, the Division will continue to monitor the progress of countries in conducting their censuses in 2011 and beyond. One of the tools used for this purpose is the "census clock", which can be accessed at: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/census2010.htm. The primary function of monitoring national census activities is to set up an alert system to assess the status of census-taking throughout the world, and also to identify countries that are postponing their census-taking so that there could be follow-up to investigate the cause(s) of the postponement. Also, information on census activities posted on the 2010 World Programme website will be continuously updated for the remainder of the census round, and additional documents added to the Census Knowledge Base. Active participation of countries in providing documents and information for inclusion on the website is vital to the success of this activity.

28. The traditional census is still the most popular methodology used in many countries; however, some countries are adopting or planning new approaches in census-taking, including the rolling census and the register-based census. The Division will monitor these new developments and methodologies for elaboration and dissemination on the Division's website. Emphasis will be placed on discussing the preconditions necessary for such methodologies to yield reliable data and the prospects for their easy transferability and adoptability by other countries.

Technical guidelines

29. The Division will continue to develop technical materials pertaining to the different census phases. Work will continue in the preparation of reference and training materials on topics critical to the 2010 World Programme. The strategy is to focus the yearly activities of the Division on each successive stage of the census process, thereby enabling the Division to update and/or develop guidelines and best practices in a rational way. Materials used in workshops will be refined and adapted to online training materials for use by a wider audience. In the coming years possible areas for technical reports could be guidelines on archiving census data and administrative/methodological reports.

Expert group meeting

30. As the 2010 World Programme passes its mid-point period, the Division will start examining lessons learned from the 2010 round and new developments in census-taking, particularly in terms of changes in topics covered, methodologies and techniques newly introduced. An experts meeting will be organized in 2011 to look

into these and new approaches in census-taking that could be useful for the second half of the 2010 World Programme and prepare the way for possible revision of the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 2* in light of lessons learned since 2005.

Training workshops

31. In 2011, the Division's training activities will focus on the following:

(a) **Regional and national seminars on census data dissemination and analysis.** Realizing the challenges faced by many developing countries in ensuring the effective analysis and dissemination of their census data, the Division, in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders, will continue to organize seminars in regions not covered so far under the 2010 World Programme to discuss and share information on national practices on census data analysis and strategies and technologies for data dissemination;

(b) **Regional seminars on archiving census data.** Census data constitute valuable and irreplaceable assets of a country that should be managed in a way that secures their archiving and encourages their widest possible use and reuse. Documenting and archiving data is especially important for comparative temporal analysis. National statistical offices need to develop or improve in-house data archiving capability. However, many developing countries not only lack the capacity for archiving but also do not consider this to be a key issue in the census life cycle. The regional seminars will address the major issues in documenting and archiving census data and facilitate the exchange of good practices;

(c) **Training workshops on the implementation of CensusInfo.** The CensusInfo software has been further fine-tuned in 2010 based mainly on the experience of the regional and national workshops conducted by the Division. Also, more advocacy materials to promote its use have been finalized in 2010. The CensusInfo training workshops planned for 2011 will enable countries to develop capacity to create national adaptations of the software for disseminating census data.

Technical assistance

32. Technical assistance missions will be undertaken to provide country-specific support, upon request. The aim of the missions will be to strengthen the capacity of developing countries in implementing censuses.

Support for the 2010 World Programme

33. Recognizing that international, regional, subregional and national organizations and other entities are stakeholders in the 2010 World Programme, the Division will continue to enhance the communication networks needed to support the Programme. The support of stakeholders has been instrumental to achieving the goals of the 2010 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses. The importance of ensuring that this support is continued throughout the duration of the 2010 round of censuses cannot be overemphasized, especially when taking into consideration the host of continuing activities related to the Programme.

34. **The Commission is invited to take note of the present report, and support the activities that the Division undertook to enhance national implementation of the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme.**

Annex I

Census dates for 2010 round of population and housing censuses

Country or area	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*
Africa										
Algeria				X						
Angola									XX	
Benin								XX		
Botswana							XX			
Burkina Faso		X								
Burundi				X						
Cameroon	X									
Cape Verde						X				
Central African Republic									XX	
Chad					X					
Comoros									XX	
Congo			X							
Côte d'Ivoire							XX			
Democratic Republic of the Congo							XX			
Djibouti					X					
Egypt		X								
Equatorial Guinea										
Eritrea							XX			
Ethiopia			X							
Gabon									XX	
Gambia									XX	
Ghana						X				
Guinea							XX			
Guinea-Bissau					X					
Kenya					X					

Country or area	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*
Lesotho		X								
Liberia				X						
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya		X								
Madagascar							XX			
Malawi				X						
Mali					X					
Mauritania						XX				
Mauritius							XX			
Mayotte			X							
Morocco										XX
Mozambique			X							
Namibia							XX			
Niger							XX			
Nigeria		X								
Réunion		X								
Rwanda								XX		
Saint Helena				X						
Sao Tome and Principe							XX			
Senegal							XX			
Seychelles						X				
Sierra Leone										XX
Somalia										
South Africa							XX			
Sudan				X						
Swaziland			X							
Togo						X				
Tunisia										XX
Uganda								XX		
United Republic of Tanzania								XX		

Country or area	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*
Western Sahara										
Zambia						X				
Zimbabwe								XX		
Asia										
Afghanistan										
Armenia							XX			
Azerbaijan					X					
Bahrain						X				
Bangladesh							XX			
Bhutan	X									
Brunei Darussalam							XX			
Cambodia				X						
China						X				
China, Hong Kong SAR		X					XX			
China, Macao SAR		X					XX			
Cyprus							XX			
Democratic People's Republic of Korea				X						
Georgia								XX		
India							XX			
Indonesia						X				
Iran (Islamic Republic of)		X					XX			
Iraq						XX				
Israel				X						
Japan	X					X				
Jordan										XX
Kazakhstan					X					
Kuwait	X					X				
Kyrgyzstan					X					

Country or area	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*
Lao People's Democratic Republic	X									
Lebanon										
Malaysia						X				
Maldives		X					XX			
Mongolia						X				
Myanmar										
Nepal							XX			
Occupied Palestinian Territory			X							
Oman						XX				
Pakistan							XX			
Philippines			X			X				
Qatar						X				
Republic of Korea	X					X				
Saudi Arabia						X				
Singapore						X				
Sri Lanka							XX			
Syrian Arab Republic										XX
Tajikistan						X				
Thailand						X				
Timor-Leste						X				
Turkey							XX			
Turkmenistan								XX		
United Arab Emirates	X					X				
Uzbekistan										
Viet Nam					X					
Yemen										XX
Europe										
Albania							XX			

Country or area	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Andorra[a]										
Austria[b]							XX			
Belarus					X					
Belgium[b]							XX			
Bosnia and Herzegovina							XX			
Bulgaria							XX			
Channel Islands — Guernsey							XX			
Channel Islands — Jersey							XX			
Croatia							XX			
Czech Republic							XX			
Denmark[a]							XX			
Estonia							XX			
Faroe Islands[a]							XX			
Finland[a]						XX				
France		X								
Germany							XX			
Gibraltar									XX	
Greece							XX			
Holy See[a]					X					
Hungary							XX			
Iceland[a]							XX			
Ireland		X					XX			
Isle of Man		X								
Italy							XX			
Latvia[b]							XX			
Liechtenstein[b]						XX				
Lithuania							XX			
Luxembourg							XX			
Malta	X						XX			

Country or area	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*
Monaco[a]				X						
Montenegro							XX			
Netherlands[a]							XX			
Norway[a]							XX			
Poland							XX			
Portugal							XX			
Republic of Moldova								XX		
Romania							XX			
Russian Federation						X				
San Marino[a]										
Serbia							XX			
Slovakia							XX			
Slovenia[b]							XX			
Spain							XX			
Svalbard and Jan Mayen Islands[a]							XX			
Sweden[a]							XX			
Switzerland[b]						XX				
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia							XX			
Ukraine							XX			
United Kingdom							XX			
– England and Wales							XX			
– Scotland							XX			
– Northern Ireland							XX			
Northern America										
Bermuda						X				
Canada		X					XX			
Greenland[a]						XX				
St. Pierre and Miquelon		X								

Country or area	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*
United States of America						X				
Latin America and the Caribbean										
Anguilla							XX			
Antigua and Barbuda							XX			
Argentina						X				
Aruba						X				
Bahamas						X				
Barbados						X				
Belize						X				
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)									XX	
Brazil						X				
British Virgin Islands						X				
Cayman Islands						X				
Chile								XX		
Colombia	X									XX
Costa Rica							XX			
Cuba								XX		
Dominica							XX			
Dominican Republic						X				
Ecuador						X				
El Salvador			X							
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)		X								
French Guiana		X								
Grenada							XX			
Guadeloupe		X								
Guatemala								XX		
Guyana								XX		
Haiti									XX	

Country or area	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*
Honduras								XX		
Jamaica							XX			
Martinique		X								
Mexico	X					X				
Montserrat							XX			
Netherlands Antilles							XX			
Nicaragua	X									
Panama						X				
Paraguay								XX		
Peru			X							
Puerto Rico						X				
Saint Kitts and Nevis							XX			
Saint Lucia						X				
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines							XX			
Suriname							XX			
Trinidad and Tobago							XX			
Turks and Caicos Islands							XX			
United States Virgin Islands						X				
Uruguay							XX			
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)							XX			
Oceania										
American Samoa						X				
Australia		X					XX			
Cook Islands		X					XX			
Fiji			X							
French Polynesia			X							
Guam						X				
Kiribati	X					X				

Country or area	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Marshall Islands							XX			
Micronesia (Federated States of)						X				
Nauru								XX		
New Caledonia					X					
New Zealand		X					XX			
Niue		X					XX			
Norfolk Island		X					XX			
Northern Mariana Islands						X				
Palau	X					X				
Papua New Guinea							XX			
Pitcairn	X									
Samoa		X					XX			
Solomon Islands					X					
Tokelau		X					XX			
Tonga		X								
Tuvalu								XX		
Vanuatu					X					
Wallis and Futuna Islands				X						

X: census already taken
XX: census scheduled
Note: For an update on information presented in this table, see http://unstats.un.org/unsd/census2010.htm.
[a] Population figures compiled from population registers.
[b] Population figures compiled from traditional censuses and population registers.

Annex II

Highlight of the findings of the assessment of census methodology used by countries

As mentioned in paragraph 25, the Division gathered information on methodologies used by countries for the 2010 census round through a questionnaire sent to national statistical offices in 2009. One hundred and thirty-eight countries completed the questionnaire, which focused on methodologies used by countries during the 2010 census round with regard to cartography, method of enumeration, data processing, evaluation and dissemination. The questionnaire also included a section on technical external assistance needs and areas where countries could offer assistance to others. A summary of the main highlights of the analysis is given below:

Cartography

- More than half of responding countries or areas in Africa and Asia still use paper-based enumeration maps. However, digitized maps are increasingly used in most of the regions (globally about 80 per cent).
- More than 90 countries or areas are using the Global Positioning System (GPS) with Geographic Information System (GIS) technology for the development of census maps, and in some cases for monitoring census operations. Furthermore, GIS is used for the dissemination of census results.
- Few countries indicated that they are undertaking spatial analysis.

Mode of enumeration

- Face-to-face interviews remain the most common approach for conducting censuses in the 2010 round. Of the responding countries, about 85 per cent are using this mode of enumeration for their censuses.
- There has been an increase in the number of countries that are using non-traditional modes of enumeration, including use of the Internet and registers.
- A substantial number of countries use more than one mode of enumeration, although enumeration through face-to-face interviews is still the most common one used.
- More countries or areas in Europe, compared with other regions, are relying on alternative methods for conducting censuses. For example, of the 39 responding countries or areas in Europe, 12 are using administrative registers in the place of the traditional census.

Data processing

- As a result of rapid changes in new technologies, most of the countries or areas (54 per cent) are using a combination of methods to capture census data, e.g., manual data entry with use of the Internet and/or optical data capture.

- Between the 2000 and 2010 census rounds there has been an increase in the use of the Internet as a method of census data capture, although it is usually used as a secondary method.

- Use of personal digital assistant (PDA) technology for data capture in censuses in all regions is worth noting, with about 9 per cent (13 countries) of the responding countries using this technology, generally in combination with other methods.

- More than 70 per cent of the countries use or plan to use a combination of manual and automated editing while the remaining countries use or plan to use either only manual editing or only automated editing. Among the countries with editing systems, 18 countries (8 in Asia, 6 in Europe, 3 in Africa and 1 in North America) do not apply imputation for any type of missing data.

Census evaluation

- Most countries or areas evaluate their censuses with more undertaking a post-enumeration survey than those that use demographic methods. About one third of those that evaluate their censuses use a combination of a post-enumeration survey and demographic analysis.

- The post-enumeration survey is generally used to evaluate coverage of the census and to a lesser extent, to assess content error.

- About 80 per cent of countries or areas will publish census evaluation reports to provide users with information to assess the quality of census results for the 2010 round of censuses.

Dissemination

- Print publications, despite their cost of production, remain the principal tool of census data dissemination in all regions of the world. However, some more developed countries are ceasing dissemination through print publications and are relying primarily on electronic media.

- Despite the potential of online census databases to provide users with a rich and relatively inexpensive source of information, the extent of dissemination through online databases lags behind that through print and other electronic media.

- About 82 per cent of countries or areas have an archiving system for storing and maintaining census data, although many countries or areas in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Oceania lack a proper archiving system for census data management.

Challenges

- Demonstrating the extent of unmet need for external assistance, 86 of the 138 countries that responded to the questionnaire stated that they required external assistance in at least one aspect of the census operation.

- Among the countries that completed the questionnaire, over 60 per cent in each region, except in Northern America and Europe, required(d) assistance to conduct their censuses in the 2010 round, mostly with new technologies,

cartography, quality assurance, analysis and dissemination, followed by requests for assistance with data processing, funding sources, data capture, publicity and communication strategies.

- Assistance was required by many countries with new technologies for scanning, GPS/GIS, online mapping tools, using personal digital assistants, hand-held mobile technology, using phones for monitoring and control, and e-census.

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Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Items for information: health statistics

Report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Health Statistics

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its forty-first session (see E/2010/24, chap. I.A), the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Health Statistics, which is presented to the Commission for information. The Commission is requested to take note of the report.

* E/CN.3/2011/1.

10-67871 (E) 281210

Please recycle

Report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Health Statistics

1. At the fortieth session of the Statistical Commission, held in February 2009, the Intersecretariat Working Group on Health Statistics presented a draft Framework for health statistics. The Commission expressed appreciation for the efforts made by the Working Group in developing the Framework and encouraged the Group to finalize it. The Commission recognized the complexity of developing such a framework and urged the Working Group to ensure that the Framework (a) is easy to use and identifies areas of priority; (b) contributes to the enhanced comparability of health statistics and indicators that should be internationally comparable; (c) is of practical utility; (d) is synchronized with international standards; (e) is developed in coordination with all relevant stakeholders; and (f) takes into account the different circumstances prevailing in different countries.[1]

2. The Framework outlines the content of health statistics and the relationship between content and the most common sources of health data. Representatives of the following countries were involved in its development: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Norway, the Philippines, South Africa and the United States of America. The Framework was developed in response to the lack of core health statistics for use by countries and for cross-national comparisons. It will facilitate greater coordination between the national statistical authorities and ministries of health. The Framework will also provide a mechanism whereby the funding provided by international agencies and other donors that supports a significant amount of health data collection can be directed towards providing health information for use at the country and international levels. The lack of coordination between ministries and national statistical offices as well as the importance of donors in the process of funding data collection are particularly significant in the area of health statistics. A proper framework would also improve the quality of data collection, analysis and dissemination as well as foster the development of statistical capacity at the country level.

3. The Framework provides a structure for identifying the kind of information that should be collected as well as data gaps and for determining where international standards are needed so as to support the collection of high-quality information. Specifically, the Framework clarifies the content of health statistics; reflects the nature of relationships between and within content areas; makes it possible to identify an overall and coherent data-collection system that would provide information on a range of topics, so that piecemeal or silo statistical systems can be eliminated; and facilitates the identification of areas where innovative approaches to data collection are needed.

4. Although it has not been possible for the Intersecretariat Working Group on Health Statistics to meet as a group, an article describing the Framework has been submitted for publication in a special issue of the *Journal of the International Association of Official Statistics* on health statistics.

5. Work on the Framework itself has progressed slowly, but several members of the Working Group have been involved in efforts by related groups that will provide input into the Framework. It should be noted that the Washington Group on

[1] See E/2009/24, chap. I.B, decision 40/107.

Disability Statistics and the Budapest Initiative on Measuring Health Status recently finalized a core question set for the measurement of functional status across a range of domains. That work will have a direct impact on the further development of the Framework.

6. Membership in the Intersecretariat Working Group on Health Statistics is open to all countries and international organizations with an interest in the topic and the willingness to devote time to solving long-standing problems. It is essential that membership of the Working Group be balanced in terms of geographic distribution and the level of development of statistical systems. In addition, several members of the Working Group have retired. While some countries have identified replacements for them, others have not. It will be key in the coming year to confirm the continuing participation of current members and to identify new members, not only from countries that have participated in the past but also from any other countries that would like to participate. Interested countries should contact the chair of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Health Statistics[2] or the United Nations Statistics Division.[3] Over the next several years, the work of the Group will be greatly facilitated by a limited number of face-to-face meetings. Some funding will be needed to offset the travel costs of certain participants.

7. The goal of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Health Statistics is to finalize the Framework. In addition, the Working Group will provide a mechanism that will facilitate the institutionalization of health statistics by acting as a link between the statistical system and organizations interested in health and health data, particularly ministries of health, and the World Health Organization and other United Nations agencies. Rather than duplicate the work done in the area of health statistics by other organizations, the Working Group can suggest new initiatives when necessary and could act to vet proposals made by other groups. The Working Group promotes broader accountability, given that country members represent their national statistical authorities and the Working Group reports to the United Nations Statistical Commission.

[2] Ms. Jennifer Maddans, Associate Director for Science, National Centre for Health Statistics, at JMadans@cdc.gov.

[3] Ms. Keiko Osaki, Chief, Demographic and Social Statistics Branch, Statistics Division, United Nations, at osaki@un.org.

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Items for information: education statistics

Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on education statistics

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its forty-first session (see E/2010/24, chap. I.A), the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on education statistics, which is presented to the Commission for information. The Commission is requested to take note of the report.

* E/CN.3/2011/1.

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Please recycle

Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on education statistics

I. Introduction

1. The present report, submitted pursuant to a request of the Statistical Commission at its fortieth session, held in 2009, addresses two items, namely, the revision and implementation of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) and the establishment of an intersecretariat working group on education statistics.

II. Revision and implementation of the International Standard Classification of Education

2. Work on the latest revision of the International Standard Classification of Education was mandated in a resolution of the thirty-fourth General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), held in October and November 2007. UNESCO was asked to initiate a consultation of experts from member States and relevant international organizations about ISCED, taking into account the changes that had taken place in the structure of education systems since the revision undertaken in 1997 (ISCED 1997) and giving special attention to higher education.

3. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics was charged with leading this review, working in close collaboration with relevant international organizations including, in particular, its education data collection partners, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat). In late 2008, the three organizations held a joint seminar on ISCED concepts and implementation, which helped to identify some of the key elements of ISCED 1997 which might need to be revised, including the structure of the tertiary education levels; the measurement of educational attainment and the implementation of ISCED in household surveys; the definition and classification of learning activities and the governance of the implementation of ISCED.

4. A technical advisory panel of 15 education and statistics experts from across the world,[1] including representatives of key international organizations,[2] was established to guide the review strategy and take part in the development of detailed proposals for the revision. At its fortieth session, held in February 2009, the Statistical Commission endorsed the establishment of the panel and encouraged the participation of countries, especially developing countries, in the review process.

5. The technical advisory panel held four meetings between January 2009 and December 2010, with a fifth meeting planned for February 2011. The scope of the revision was determined, based on the advice of the panel, in the light of the timetable for adoption by the General Conference. In 2009, detailed proposals for

[1] Namely, Africa, the Arab States, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe and Latin America.

[2] The Statistical Office of the European Communities, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the United Nations Children's Fund.

the revision were developed and reviewed by the panel and were discussed, in 2009 and 2010, at separate regional meetings with experts from the Arab States, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa. A total of 54 experts attended the regional expert meetings, with an average of 8 to 12 experts at each meeting, together with panel members and staff of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Discussions on the proposals also took place with national experts attending meetings on education statistics held by Eurostat and OECD in both 2009 and 2010. Presentations on the proposed revision were given at international conferences, including the World Conference on Higher Education, held at UNESCO headquarters in July 2009, and the fourteenth World Congress of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies, held in June 2010.

6. In addition, proposals were presented and discussed with the Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications at its meeting in September 2009.

7. The proposed revisions cover the following points:

(a) An extension and renaming of the lowest level of education (early childhood education, or ISCED 0) to include educational programmes for very young children (typically aged 0 to 3 years) but as a separate subcategory, entitled "early childhood development", to allow for continuity of the time series of statistics on pre-primary education;

(b) More extensive definitions of the types of education, in particular formal and non-formal education, to allow for a more precise definition of the coverage of education within ISCED;

(c) A simplification of programme orientation from three categories to two (general and vocational);

(d) The introduction of new concepts of successful completion of ISCED levels, with or without access to higher levels of education, which replaces the ISCED 1997 concept of programme destination and better distinguishes between completion and non-completion of ISCED levels;

(e) The introduction of qualifications as a derived variable within ISCED;

(f) A redefinition of education at the tertiary level, taking into account changes across the world at this level since 1997; the revision proposes four levels of tertiary education: short cycle tertiary; bachelor's level and equivalent degrees; master's level and equivalent; and doctorate level;

(g) New coding systems both for educational programmes and for educational attainment;

(h) A new governance procedure for ensuring the effective adoption and implementation of the new ISCED.

8. The initial proposals were revised in the light of feedback from regional and international experts. A complete draft text was finalized and approved by panel members in May 2010 and first presented at a two-day inter-agency meeting and informational presentation to UNESCO at its headquarters in Paris, also in May. The draft ISCED was then sent for global consultation to all member States of UNESCO, to both their Ministries of Education and, with the assistance of the United Nations Statistics Division, all national statistical offices. In addition, the proposals were sent to members of the Expert Group on International Economic and

Social Classifications, members of the ISCED technical advisory panel, the national and regional experts who were invited to the regional meetings on ISCED in 2009 and 2010 and the relevant international agencies and national contacts responsible for submitting data on education, literacy or educational attainment to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics or its data collection partners, OECD and Eurostat.

9. By the end of the consultation, in late October 2010, over 110 responses from more than 80 countries had been received, including detailed comments from members of the Expert Group, Eurostat and other regional or international agencies. At the time of writing, these responses, which are generally supportive of the proposals, were being analysed and assessed. The draft text will be finalized in collaboration with members of the panel in mid-February 2011.

10. The revised ISCED, after a review by the Executive Board of UNESCO in 2011, will be submitted to the General Conference of UNESCO in October 2011 for adoption by the member States of the organization.

11. The new ISCED will be accompanied by an extensive glossary of terms. In the period leading up to the adoption of the new ISCED, an operational manual will be drafted to assist countries in using the new classification. It will include practical examples of the mapping of national educational programmes to the new ISCED. Ultimately, all countries will be expected to complete an ISCED mapping, which is a tool expected to form a core element of the governance procedures.

12. Throughout 2011 and 2012 regional workshops run by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and education statistics meetings hosted by Eurostat and OECD will inform countries about the changes and assist them in adapting to the new classification. It is expected that the first international data collections based on the revised ISCED will take place starting in 2013, which will give countries adequate time to adapt national data reporting systems.

13. The scope of the current revision was determined in consultation with the panel. One key area, which has not been changed in the revision, is the classification of fields of education. It has been decided that this will be the subject of a subsequent revision. Work is expected to begin in 2011 on the development of a more detailed and up-to-date classification of fields of education and training and will involve the active collaboration of relevant international organizations including, but not necessarily limited to, Eurostat and OECD.

III. An intersecretariat working group on education statistics

14. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics has further considered the establishment of an intersecretariat working group on education statistics, to be led by the Institute, in order to improve coordination mechanisms, maintain and promote the development of international standards and minimize duplicate efforts among international agencies, concerning aspects not covered by existing mechanisms.

15. As documented in the report of the Commission's Task Force on Education Statistics, there is clear evidence of strong technical coordination among the major producers of cross-national education data and statistics, namely the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Eurostat and OECD, in terms of joint methodological development (e.g., the manual developed collaboratively by all three bodies (UOE manual) and the ISCED review), data-sharing and efforts to improve the efficiency

of data and metadata (e.g., Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) platforms), which reduces the reporting burden of member States and allows for collaboration in the use and interpretation of data.

16. Coordination has been improved at the global level, where the UNESCO Institute for Statistics has initiated collaboration in large-scale joint projects with such international agencies as the United Nations Children's Fund (for out-of-school children) and the World Bank (for benchmarking education systems for results), and where the Institute has been given responsibilities for sectoral leadership and is represented on the steering committees of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (for capacity development) and the International Household Survey Network (for survey-based data collection and methodology).

17. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics has also reached out to regional bodies: regional commissions and specialized agencies of the United Nations, regional development banks, intergovernmental and other groups in Africa and Latin America such as the African Union and the Organization of American States, in order to ensure improved coordination in the collection, processing and use of comparative education statistics. With the support of regional stakeholders, the Institute is launching new regionally specific data collections based on locally relevant information needs.

18. Furthermore, the Institute has engaged with reference groups in specific education subsectors, such as technical and vocational education and adult education, and is introducing several new thematic advisory groups that will draw on the expertise of the relevant international agencies.

19. In the light of these rapidly evolving contexts and new initiatives to strengthen coordination at the regional and global levels, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics is of the view that further time is needed in order to reassess and clarify the role and working modalities of an intersecretariat working group.

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Items for information: agricultural statistics

Report of the Friends of the Chair on Agricultural Statistics

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its forty-first session (see E/2010/24, chap. I.A), the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Friends of the Chair on Agricultural Statistics. The report presents the progress made in the development of the implementation plan of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics, which was endorsed by the Commission at its forty-first session.

An inclusive process, with the involvement of all key stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels, has been established in order to develop the implementation plan, which adopts a regional approach to take account of the different levels of statistical development among regions and ensure ownership by regional institutions. The implementation plan provides for the development of a standard framework for the country assessment that will be used as a basis for the implementation of targeted interventions at the national level. A comprehensive technical assistance programme, an articulated training programme and a targeted research agenda have been developed. A governance framework with coordinating structures at the global, regional and national levels is proposed. The Plan outlines a comprehensive strategy for the mobilization of resources and technical support from developed countries, the donor community and international organizations providing technical assistance. The Statistical Commission is invited to take note of the steps taken in 2010 for the development of the implementation plan and approve the next steps for 2011.

* E/CN.3/2011/1

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Report of the Friends of the Chair on Agricultural Statistics[1]

I. Introduction

1. The purpose of the present report is to describe the progress made in developing the implementation plan of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics (hereinafter referred to as the Global Strategy). It also summarizes the steps taken to integrate input from stakeholders and to obtain regional ownership.

2. The United Nations Statistical Commission initiated the process of developing a Global Strategy during its fortieth session, in February 2009, at which a consensus was reached on the need to address the current unsatisfactory situation of agricultural statistics and to launch a renewed initiative of statistical capacity-building in order to strengthen national agricultural statistical systems. The Statistical Commission established a Friends of the Chair Group on Agricultural Statistics to steer the development of the Global Strategy. The process involved extensive consultations with all key stakeholders, including national statistical offices and ministries of agriculture, in international meetings and sessions of the governing bodies of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). To reach out to a broader audience, an online forum was also organized through a Wikipedia web page (wiki.asfoc.ibge.gov.br).

3. The Global Strategy was finally prepared by the World Bank and FAO, with substantial input from the Friends of the Chair working group. The purpose of the Global Strategy is to provide a framework to enable national and international statistical systems to produce the basic information needed to guide decision-making in the twenty-first century. The Global Strategy is based on three pillars:

(a) Establishing a minimum set of core data that countries will disseminate on a regular basis to meet current and emerging demands;

(b) Integrating agriculture into national statistical systems in order to meet the expectations of policymakers and other data users that statistical information be linked across the economic, social and environmental domains;

(c) Fostering the sustainability of agricultural statistical systems through governance and statistical capacity-building.

4. The Global Strategy defines a comprehensive conceptual framework for the production and use of agricultural and rural statistics, and for the information requirements of various data users. The conceptual framework, the assessment of national agricultural statistical systems and the choice of a core set of indicators all point to the need to integrate agriculture into national statistical systems.

5. The Global Strategy identifies the main tools upon which this integration will be achieved. The development of a master sample frame for agriculture will be the foundation for all data collection based on sample surveys or censuses. An

[1] The Friends of the Chair on Agricultural Statistics is led by Brazil and includes Australia, China, Cuba, Ethiopia, Italy, Morocco, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda and the United States of America. Eurostat and the World Bank participate as observers, while the Food and Agriculture Organization and the United Nations Statistics Division serve as secretariat.

integrated survey framework will be established to provide comparable data over time and across countries, using an annual survey of selected core items and periodic data collection from a set of rotating panels covering economic and environmental issues. The integration across data domains will also be ensured by an integrated data management system for all official statistics related to agriculture.

6. The Global Strategy was presented at the forty-first session of the Statistical Commission, in February 2010, where it was unanimously endorsed. The Commission urged FAO and the Friends of the Chair to expedite the development of the implementation plan aimed at strengthening national agricultural statistical systems, with the steps necessary to develop the master sample frame, the integrated survey framework and the data management system. The Commission recommended that a comprehensive technical assistance and training programme should be established. It also recommended that the implementation plan should include a well-targeted research agenda to support the implementation of the statistical methodology required by the Global Strategy and the development of methodological guidelines for specific conditions in developing countries, such as small-scale agriculture, agriculture under difficult conditions and nomadic populations. The Commission recognized that the implementation of the Global Strategy would require the mobilization of resources and technical support from countries, the donor community and international organizations providing technical assistance. The Friends of the Chair group was requested to report back to the Commission at its forty-second session on the progress made in the development of the implementation plan.

II. Actions taken in 2010

7. Since the Statistical Commission decision of February 2010, important progress has been made in the preparation of the implementation plan. Under the auspices of the Friends of the Chair group, several specific meetings were organized. These meetings served two purposes: to generate and receive further input on the implementation plan, and to obtain a commitment from the main stakeholders. The draft outline of the global implementation plan and the complete draft of the implementation plan for Africa, available as a background document to the Statistical Commission at its current session, are the result of this wide consultation with national and international statistical organizations, as well as with agricultural ministries and other governmental organizations represented in FAO governing bodies.

8. A worldwide consultation on the first drafts of the global and Africa implementation plans was held at the Fifth International Conference on Agricultural Statistics in Kampala from 13 to 15 October 2010. About 300 senior experts from 77 countries attended the conference, during which the technical sessions focused on the content of the four technical components of the implementation plans (country assessment framework, technical assistance programme, methodological research agenda and training programme) and governance mechanisms at the national, regional and global levels. The content of the plans was reviewed and discussed in detail in the light of the experiences of countries and regional and international agencies, and valuable inputs and recommendations were provided for the revision of the plans.

9. A round-table meeting of donors was held during the conference on 13 October, which resulted in an expression of strong support for the plan by the donors present at the meeting and a willingness to consider funding for its implementation at the global and regional levels.

10. At the end of the conference, the Friends of the Chair held a meeting to discuss the outcomes of the conference and ways of developing the implementation plans, taking into account the recommendations and technical inputs provided by the experts. The Friends of the Chair group formed four task teams to lead the development of the four technical components with the support of FAO.

11. The draft outline of the implementation plan was also to be presented to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Committee on Statistics at its second session, to be held in Bangkok from 15 to 17 December 2010.

III. Goal of the implementation plan

12. The goal is to implement the Global Strategy in each country so that the resulting output meets international quality standards and is comparable across countries.

13. The implementation plan will provide the framework for the country assessment that will be used as a basis to begin implementation at the national level. The plan will provide the statistical standards that will guide the development of the required methodology and determine the training and technical assistance requirements. In order to avoid duplication of effort and ensure the international comparability of the resulting agricultural statistics, a global, regional and national governance structure will be established.

IV. Developing the implementation plan

14. A regional approach has been adopted to take account of the different levels of statistical development among regions and to ensure ownership by regional institutions. Implementation plans are therefore being prepared at the global and regional levels.

15. The implementation plan needs to build on the main pillars of the Global Strategy. The first pillar — the minimum set of core data — is based on the assumption that it is not possible for every data requirement to be met every year. Therefore, the foundation on which to begin the implementation is the agreement to begin with a minimum set of core data. Country assessments should focus on the current capacity of each country to provide the set of core data. They will give indications on the needed resources, training, technical assistance and methodology. The Global Strategy provides a choice of methodologies to establish the master sample frame and the set of integrated data that needs to be tailored to the situation of each region or country. The country assessment should help the region or country to decide on the methodology and determine the training and technical assistance it needs. While the Global Strategy emphasizes the need to integrate agriculture into national statistical systems (second pillar) and provides guidelines, it leaves it up to each region or country to determine how to do so.

16. A critical part of the implementation will be establishing governance (third pillar) to coordinate the implementation efforts at the global, regional and national levels. A main governance issue at the national level will be to integrate agriculture into the national statistical system. The annex to the present document provides an overview of a proposed governance structure and the responsibilities of global, regional and national organizations.

17. In accordance with the recommendations of the Statistical Commission, a technical assistance programme, an articulated training programme and a targeted research agenda are being developed as key elements of a comprehensive **statistical capacity-building programme**. Moreover, the strengthening of country and regional systems will be based on a comprehensive assessment of their technical and operational capacities that will identify actions at the country, regional and international levels in order to define priority areas, resources required and the relevant time frame.

(a) **Country assessment**: This effort should begin with the preparation of a framework and accompanying guidelines for countries to provide an assessment of their statistical capabilities, the data they currently provide and their readiness to begin to implement the components of the Global Strategy. The assessment should determine the national capability to produce the minimum set of core data on a sustainable basis, and indicate the main areas in need of improvement to be supported by the implementation of the Global Strategy. National strategies for the development of statistics should be reviewed and, where necessary, revised to reflect the requirements to produce the minimum set of core data. The country assessment should include an evaluation of the extent of the integration of agricultural statistics into the national statistical system. It should also include an evaluation of auxiliary data, such as that coming from administrative sources. These assessments will provide the basis for the choice of methods to develop the master sample frame, the integrated survey framework and the data management system. Based on the assessment of the statistical capabilities and the revised national strategies for the development of statistics, the technical assistance and training requirements should be outlined. National action plans based on revised national strategies will identify the responsibilities of the different stakeholders;

(b) **Training**: Implementation of the training component of the Global Strategy will aim to: (i) strengthen the capacity of national agencies concerned with the collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of agricultural statistics by increasing the knowledge, skills and competencies of their staff; and (ii) strengthen and sustain the capacity of regional and subregional training centres to develop and deliver good-quality training in statistics-related topics. The country assessment should contain a review of the training needed in each country to provide it with the capability to begin the implementation of the Global Strategy and sustain the system over time. One issue is that training for agricultural statisticians needs to be integrated with the training needs of other sectors or elements of the national statistical system. The effort should begin with a detailed analysis of training needs so as to provide a baseline assessment. Training needs to include data users in order to help them understand how the data can be used. It is recognized that technical assistance will be required in order to assess training needs and provide training;

(c) **Technical assistance**: Technical assistance will be required in many areas, depending on each country's capabilities. The starting point will be the need

for technical assistance identified by the country assessments. Such assistance should also provide guidance for the development of national-sector strategic plans for agricultural statistics and for their integration into national strategies for the development of statistics to produce the minimum set of core data. Technical assistance will include the following: support to establish the governance structure; undertaking advocacy and policy dialogue between Government and development partners for mainstreaming agricultural statistics; determining the methodology to be used; and providing guidance for the overall implementation. The technical assistance should be coordinated at the regional and global levels in order to ensure that consistent methods are used, resulting in internationally comparable output. This coordination requires a global and regional governance structure to implement the Global Strategy. A key technical assistance principle, however, is that there should be country ownership in the implementation process;

(d) **Research**: This component of the implementation plan aims to improve agricultural data collection and management by preparing technical guidelines and handbooks on advanced methodologies, standards and tools related to the pillars of the Global Strategy. Developing countries face challenges in collecting data that will allow them to estimate agricultural production. For example, smallholdings and multicropping practices pose problems for measuring crop areas and production. Crop-cutting methods are difficult to apply for root crops. In addition the conceptual framework for agricultural statistics calls for a linkage between the farm, the household and land use, pointing to the need to establish a sample frame using new methodology such as remote sensing. The Global Strategy also presents an opportunity to make use of other new technology such as global positioning systems. For developing countries, there is a need to adapt existing relevant methodologies available in developed countries. When necessary, new methods will be developed for specific issues faced by developing countries, such as the enumeration of nomadic livestock and the production of root crops and mixed crops.

18. Standards need to be defined and operational guidelines provided on statistical methodology for sample frames, sample survey frameworks (including concepts and definitions) and techniques for data collection, validation, estimation and analysis.

19. The technical components will be coordinated through an overall logical framework that will ensure that the linkages among training, technical assistance and research activities are integrated and properly sequenced. An important purpose of the global implementation plan is to provide an overall monitoring system, including indicators, to assess performance of the regional implementation plans.

20. The main challenge faced by the Global Strategy is that its implementation should result in consistent and comparable results across countries. The integration of agriculture into national statistical systems poses another challenge, and will require considerable effort where the national statistical offices and ministries operate their own independent statistical programmes. In order to manage the implementation plans and monitor progress, avoid duplication of effort and ensure the international comparability of the resulting outputs, a **governance framework** is proposed, with coordinating structures at the global, regional and national levels. Strong global and regional support will be required to coordinate the country assessments and provide technical support, training and methodological standards so that the end results are internationally comparable. The implementation plan must also deal with the fact that the membership of the Statistical Commission is made up

of national statistical offices, with ministries of agriculture having little or no voice. The establishment of a governance structure should consider lessons learned from the governance structure used for the International Comparison Programme; however, the implementation of the Global Strategy will depend on the capacity of each country to determine the starting point, the choice of methodology and the pace at which it will proceed. The annex to the present document provides a more complete proposal for a governance structure at the global, regional and national levels.

V. Output

21. The output of this effort will consist of global and regional implementation plans of the Global Strategy. The outputs of the global plan are global public goods, as well as the structures necessary for the implementation of the Global Strategy. Global public goods include:

(a) The framework for assessment of the status of agricultural statistics in countries;

(b) Guidelines and materials providing advocacy for national statistical systems;

(c) Statistical standards that guide the choice of methodology to integrate agriculture into national statistical systems;

(d) A governance structure that provides for global, regional and national coordination of the establishment of statistical standards, guidelines, training, technical assistance and methodological development;

(e) The development of globally applicable training materials and online resources.

22. The regional implementation plans adapt the global frameworks, norms and statistical standards to regional peculiarities and needs, as needed. They analyse national statistical capacities and develop the systems of support to countries in terms of diagnosis, planning, integration into the national statistical system and implementation of national plans. In addition, they design the region-specific research programme and the support of agricultural statistical capacity development in countries and the region. The programmes under the regional implementation plans produce region-specific public goods and services, and country-specific capacity development support for which there are regional or subregional economies of scale. These activities will enable countries to prepare their national sector strategic plans for agricultural statistics and mobilize corresponding resources in order to produce the minimum core set of data.

23. It is proposed that the regional implementation plans be developed through strong regional ownership, with the regional commissions and regional development banks as coordinators and other regional and subregional organizations as partners. This is the model followed in the Africa region, where the implementation plan for Africa has been developed through a regional partnership. The African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Economic Commission for Africa, with the support of FAO, have taken the lead as regional coordinators in preparing the first regional implementation plan, with the participation of several regional partners like the

African Union/New Partnership for Africa's Development, the Economic and Statistical Observatory of Sub-Saharan Africa (AFRISTAT), the Economic Community of West African States, the West African Economic and Monetary Union and the Southern African Development Community. The plan for Africa includes many elements which are relevant globally and also region-specific.

24. The implementation of the Global Strategy will proceed in stages. In the first stage, the outputs will focus on the framework, the country assessment, the development of regional implementation plans and the mobilization of resources for implementation. The regional implementation plans can move forward when regions are ready to develop their initiatives.

25. It is expected that the implementation of the Global Strategy by countries will result in the substantial improvement of agricultural statistics in the next decade, particularly in developing countries. The progress will be measured through indicators similar to those selected in the implementation plan for Africa. For example, the implementation plan for Africa sets the following targets against the baseline of 2010:

(a) 60 per cent of countries producing and reporting minimum sets of core agricultural data;

(b) 80 per cent of countries having functioning coordination structures for agricultural statistics (up from a current level of 28 per cent);

(c) At least 35 countries with a sector strategic plan for agricultural statistics designed in the context of national strategies for the development of statistics for the integration of agriculture into the national statistical system (currently, 19 countries have such national strategies).

VI. Resource mobilization strategy

26. Agricultural statistics have been considered a low priority on the agenda of both donors and national Governments for many years. A renewed initiative of resource mobilization is essential to attract the attention of donors to the current status of agricultural statistics and to the benefits of better-quality statistical information for designing and monitoring policies in support of agricultural and rural development. A substantial amount of funding will be needed to improve the quality of agricultural statistics and build a sound and sustainable agricultural statistical system in developing countries. The initial estimate of the budget needed for the execution of the first phase of the implementation plan for Africa is about $50 million.

27. The objective of the resource mobilization strategy is to secure adequate funding and support for the global and regional implementation plans. The global implementation plan will be supported by a global trust fund for agricultural statistics. As discussed in previous sections, it is expected that funds from the global trust fund will be allocated for global public goods and to regions where the mobilization of resources is weaker.

28. In the Africa region, the regional implementation plan will be supported by a regional trust fund, to be managed by AfDB.

29. In order to ensure broader support, donors will have the opportunity not only to contribute to multi-donor trust funds, but also to earmark funding for specific technical components of the implementation plans or for supporting bilateral country programmes.

30. An essential component of the resource mobilization strategy is the communications campaign advocating for the global and regional implementation plan and for the importance of sound national agricultural statistical systems. Donors meetings will be organized on the sidelines of the forty-second session of the Statistical Commission and at FAO headquarters. It is also foreseen that a series of high-level visits to key donor agencies will be undertaken by senior officers of FAO, the World Bank and AfDB. The global and regional implementation plans will also be presented at the next meeting of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century (Paris21) Board in April 2011 and of the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development in order to reach out and obtain support from the user community as well.

VII. Next steps

31. Substantial progress has been made in the development of the implementation plans at the global and regional levels, particularly in the Africa region, but more work is needed to complete this task. The next steps that FAO, under the guidance of the Friends of the Chair group, will have to undertake in 2011 include:

(a) Organizing (and participating in) international and regional statistical meetings to review the draft global implementation plan and regional plans. Upcoming meetings include the next sessions of the FAO regional commissions on agricultural statistics in Africa and Latin America, as well as the next International Statistical Institute session in Dublin;

(b) Completing the country assessment framework and assessments in the Africa region;

(c) Developing, based on the country assessment framework, a suite of indicators to be used to measure progress in the improvement of agricultural statistics;

(d) Establishing the Global Strategy Steering Committee, the Global Coordinating Office and the Technical Advisory Committee to steer the implementation of the Global Strategy;

(e) Collaborating with regional organizations that can take a leadership role in the development of regional implementation plans in the Latin America and the Asia-Pacific regions, while in the meantime incorporating best practices and lessons learned from the progress made in the implementation plan for the Africa region;

(f) Moving forward on the resource mobilization strategy establishing the global and regional trust funds. Several donor meetings and joint visits to key donors are planned;

(g) Finalizing the global implementation plan of the Global Strategy, to be presented to the Statistical Commission in 2012 for final endorsement.

32. The Statistical Commission is invited to take note of the steps taken in 2010 for the development of the implementation plan and to approve the next steps for 2011.

Annex

Governance

1. The proposed governance framework specifies the roles and responsibilities of the global, regional and national governing bodies. The governance framework should bring together agricultural statistical organizations at all levels of governance, starting at the global level. The proposed governance framework also defines linkages among governance structures at all levels.

Global governance framework

2. The global governance framework foresees the establishment of a Global Strategy Steering Committee, a Global Coordinating Office and a Technical Advisory Committee. The overview of the global governance framework is presented in figure I below and is described in more detail in the following paragraphs and sections.

3. The Friends of the Chair group will terminate its mandate with the development of the implementation plan and will be replaced by the Global Strategy Steering Committee, which will include representatives of national statistical offices and the statistical offices of ministries of agriculture. The Global Steering Committee should also include representatives of the regional coordinating organizations and representatives of key data users.

4. The primary role of the Global Strategy Steering Committee is to ensure that ministries of agriculture and national statistical offices both have a voice in decisions taken by the Statistical Commission on matters relating to agricultural statistics. In addition, the Global Steering Committee should provide strategic leadership and oversight of the Global Coordinating Office to ensure that the implementation follows the principles provided in the Global Strategy. The Global Steering Committee will report regularly to the Statistical Commission and to the governing bodies of FAO.

5. The Global Coordinating Office should be located in the Statistics Division of FAO. The main responsibilities of the Global Coordinator will be to establish standards, provide centralized technical guidance and rule on issues that can be interpreted in different ways in different regions. The Global Coordinating Office will serve as the secretariat for the Global Strategy Steering Committee, provide the country assessment framework to be used, jointly establish with the regional secretariats the framework for a training programme and technical assistance for the regions and countries, develop statistical methodologies for the second pillar of the Global Strategy and document these methodologies in a series of statistical manuals, serve as the focal point for seeking funding, provide overall coordination support for countries in regions that do not have a viable regional coordinating body and work in collaboration with the Wye Group on Statistics on Rural Development and Agriculture Household Income, formed by the Commission to develop best practices to link farm operations with farm households.

6. The Global Coordinating Office will be assisted by a Technical Advisory Committee that comprises experts in fields important for the implementation of the Global Strategy, namely sample frame development, sample and survey design, development of statistical databases for dissemination purposes, use of technology

(such as remote sensing and geopositioning sensors) for the production of agricultural statistics and electronic data collection, and use of administrative data. The Wye Group or its successor may contribute to this committee on issues relating to rural statistics and rural household income and well-being.

Regional governance framework

7. The Governance structures established at the regional level should be determined by the regional organizations that are leading the regional implementation plan. Such structures may include a regional steering committee, a regional coordinator office and technical advisers; nevertheless, their exact nature will be defined by the regional implementation plan.

8. Regional coordinating bodies have the major role of providing direct training and technical assistance to integrated national statistical systems. Regional coordinating bodies should also liaise with other regional and subregional offices within their regions in order to coordinate their efforts with countries, avoid duplication of effort and ensure that global standards are being followed. In particular, the regional coordinators are responsible for the following: seeking and providing funding to support the implementation of the Global Strategy at the regional level; providing technical support to countries to carry out the assessment of national statistical systems for agriculture; ensuring that national strategies for the development of statistics are revised to reflect the principles of the Global Strategy; jointly determining with the Global Coordinator the training and technical assistance requirements for the region; adapting methodologies provided by the Global Coordinator to the requirements of the region; conducting research, as required, to determine how to implement methodology provided by the Global Coordinator; forming regional steering committees; providing overall coordination of training activities and technical support to be carried out in the region; and developing partnering arrangements involving countries with well-developed statistical systems to support those countries in need of capacity-building.

National governance framework

9. Governance at the national level involves the organization of a national coordination mechanism that brings together the national statistical office, sector ministries and other agencies that provide agricultural data.

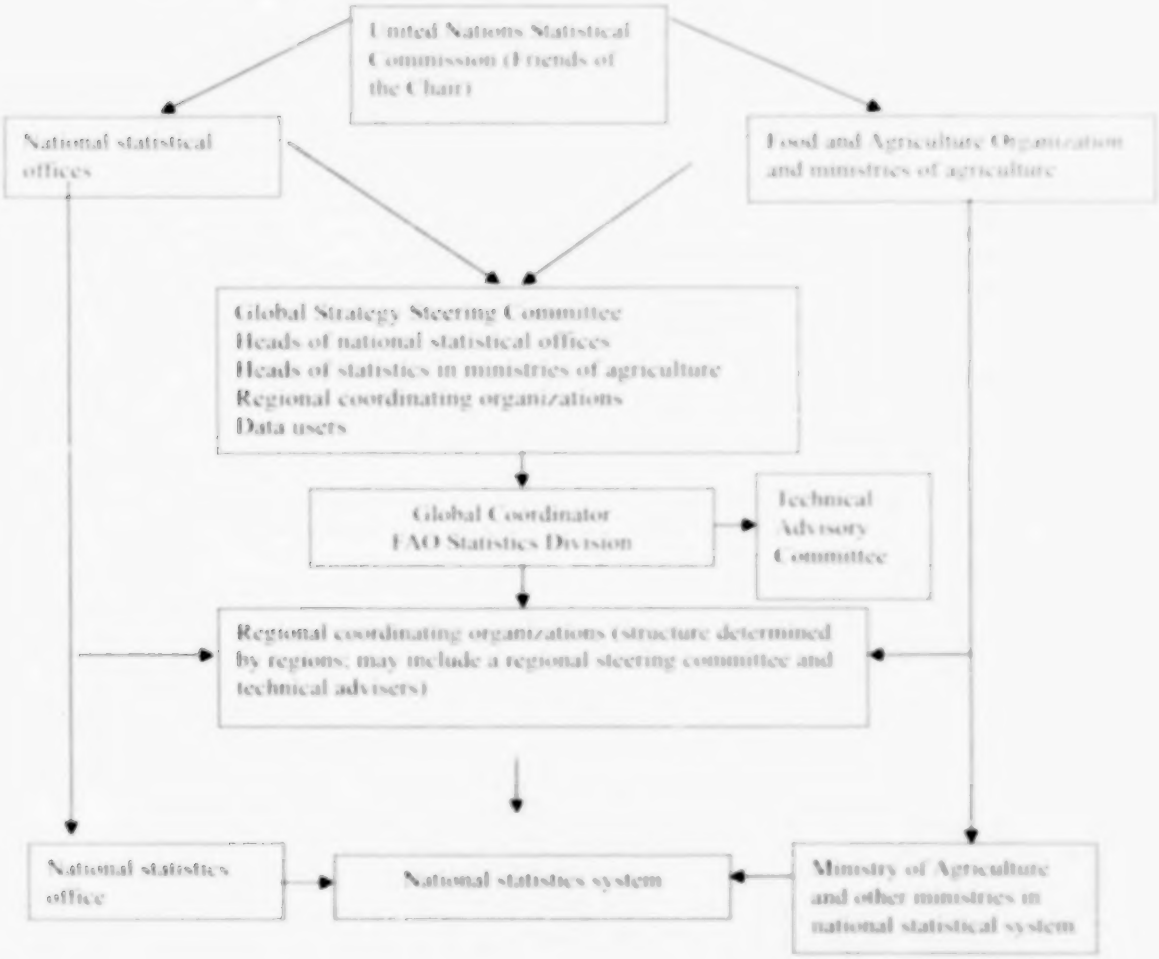
10. The coordination mechanism should ensure that the different data producers adhere to a common set of standards defined in the global and regional implementation plans. Adoption of these standards will prevent duplication of efforts and resources, as well as the publication of conflicting data. The coordination mechanism should provide a common voice for seeking resources for the agricultural statistical system within the framework of the national statistical system. The governance it provides should enable the ministries and agencies involved in the collection of agricultural data to integrate agriculture into the preparation of national strategies for the development of statistics.

11. The integration of agricultural statistics into a national statistical system implies that responsibility should be shared through the coordination mechanism. The role of each institution should nevertheless be clearly defined.

12. In order to fulfil these requirements, national governing bodies for agricultural statistics will have to be set up (where they do not already exist), with the responsibility of coordinating the detailed assessment of the country's agricultural statistics, determining the set of core data as prescribed by the Global Strategy, developing a national workplan to implement the Strategy, contributing to the revision of national strategies for the development of statistics and identifying the respective roles and responsibilities of each organization in the national governing body, implementing or revising legislation regarding the authorities and responsibilities for agricultural statistics and fostering public support for funding to ensure a sustainable statistical system.

Figure I

Overview of the governance structure to coordinate the implementation of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics


United Nations Statistical Commission (Friends of the Chair)
National statistical offices
Food and Agriculture Organization and ministries of agriculture
Global Strategy Steering Committee
Heads of national statistical offices
Heads of statistics in ministries of agriculture
Regional coordinating organizations
Data users
Global Coordinator
FAO Statistics Division
Technical Advisory Committee
Regional coordinating organizations (structure determined by regions; may include a regional steering committee and technical advisers)
National statistics office
National statistics system
Ministry of Agriculture and other ministries in national statistical system

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Item 4 (e) of the provisional agenda*
Items for information: business registers

Report of the Wiesbaden Group on Business Registers

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its forty-first session (see E/2010/24, chap. I.A), the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Wiesbaden Group on Business Registers, which is presented to the Commission for information. The Commission is requested to take note of the report.

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Report of the Wiesbaden Group on Business Registers

1. The 22nd meeting of the Wiesbaden Group on Business Registers was held from 27 to 30 September 2010 in Tallinn, hosted by Statistics Estonia. The meeting gathered 77 participants from 39 delegations and was organized in eight sessions. This report provides a brief summary of the themes discussed in each of the sessions.

2. Session 1, chaired by Ms. Svetlana Shutova, Statistics Estonia, was devoted to the presentation of country progress reports. It is a tradition for the Wiesbaden Group to open the meeting with a review of recent developments in the framework of business registers in each member country/organization. Thirty-two progress reports were presented during this session, while 42 reports had been submitted in 2010. As was the case in previous meetings of the Wiesbaden Group, this session provided an important opportunity for business register experts and managers across the world to exchange updated information on their ongoing and planned projects aimed at improving the construction, maintenance and use of business registers.

3. Session 2 on "Concepts and methods for information and data sharing" addressed the impact of economic globalization on the production, collection and interpretation of business data, and investigated the changes required in business registers and other administrative sources to appropriately gather, treat and share information in a globalized environment. The goal of this session, chaired by Mr. Andreas Lindner, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), was to discuss the strategic approaches of data producers to meet the new needs of users in response to the effects of globalization and resulting strategies to enhance competitiveness.

4. The session focused on the impact of globalization on the system of statistical units; in the case of multinational enterprises in particular, the defined statistical units are no longer fully applicable as a basis for data collection and data processing into comparable statistical figures. Other related topics discussed were the establishment of the EuroGroups Register, which aims to establish a network of registers among the statistical authorities of the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat) and Member States through the exchange of data on multinational enterprises; and the codification rules for the treatment of international sourcing within an enterprise group as a separate issue compared with international sourcing outside an enterprise group.

5. Session 3 on "Profiling (costs and benefits)" was chaired by Ms. Shirin Ahmed, US Census Bureau. Profiling is defined as a method for identifying the legal, operational and accounting structures of an enterprise group at the national and global level in order to establish the statistical units within that group and their links, and the most efficient structures for the collection of statistical data. This session further expanded the discussions on statistical units and their links within the enterprise groups by focusing on the practices, processes and challenges in profiling enterprises in business registers.

6. Participants discussed the sources and methods for profiling, as well as its uses and challenges. The session highlighted that international coordination and increased sharing of related enterprise information among statistical offices could reduce costs, enhance enterprise knowledge and address issues related to better understanding of multinational enterprises. Interesting insights came from concrete

examples of profiling both in countries with considerable experience of profiling methods and in countries that have implemented the method more recently, including through partnerships between statistical offices and large business and public administrations.

7. Session 4 addressed "Cooperation with administrative sources", which is considered an important and recurrent topic in the agenda of the Wiesbaden Group, and looks at the way in which statistical business registers are usually dependent on administrative data from sources such as the tax authority. The main objective of this session, chaired by Mr. Andrew Allen, Office for National Statistics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, was to look at how cooperation with administrative data suppliers can improve the coverage and quality of business registers.

8. A range of relevant issues were discussed in session 4, notably the use of new administrative sources, improvements to existing sources, joining different data sources, the use of new variables from existing sources, and the improvement in the frequency of data from administrative sources. The meeting acknowledged that in many countries the time is right for making more use of administrative data, especially to reduce the burden on businesses and costs of data collection. The debate also highlighted some key lessons. As business registers are dependent on administrative data but the quality of that data cannot be controlled by the register team, it is important to have multiple data sources to reduce the risk of register quality problems, and to develop detailed knowledge of the administrative data and maintain regular dialogue with suppliers. The direct involvement of statisticians in the development or improvement of administrative registers was also discussed.

9. Session 5 on "Register quality as a common task: cooperation of the register department and survey departments" was chaired by Mr. Roland Sturm, Federal Statistical Office, Germany. This session focused on the interactions of the "producers" and "consumers" of business register information, a theme often neglected. The core issue discussed in this session was the position of statistical business registers as an infrastructural, conceptual and methodological backbone for the production of business statistics in most countries. Participants discussed the mechanisms to harmonize the statistical register with the needs of its users and the organization of efficient maintenance of a statistical business register.

10. The discussions encompassed good and poor practices of interaction between the register and the subject-matter departments, and the advantages and shortcomings of different organizational structures of statistical offices and statistical systems regarding the maintenance of the business register. Participants emphasized that sharing the workload of register maintenance needs incentives for all the partners involved as well as a clear description of rules and roles of all partners.

11. Session 6 on "Improving a sector's coverage of the business register: agriculture, public sector and non-profit institutions" reviewed the activities conducted by statistical offices to analyse, process and use data sources for these sectors. Indeed, the administrative sources and commercial sources used to build business registers normally do not cover all economic sectors with the same quality, being mainly designed for publishing information about market-oriented businesses. This session investigated the distinctive features and specific issues that arise in the

use and treatment of such data sources in terms of statistical units, variables, classifications, methodology, and their integration with the rest of the register.

12. Very interesting country experiences were presented during session 6, which was chaired by Ms. Enrica Morganti, National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT), Italy. The presentations stressed, inter alia, that there are many and differentiated data sources for the agricultural sector, while the administrative sources for the non-profit sector are scarce.

13. Session 7 on "Technical developments of the registers (re-engineering)" provided an opportunity to discuss issues relevant to these topics, research results or related advancements. The choice of this theme, which had already been discussed in previous meetings of the Wiesbaden Group, was motivated by the fact that many agencies had mentioned issues concerning the technical developments and improvements of their business registers in their respective progress reports for 2009. The session was chaired by Mr. Jean Ritzen, Statistics Netherlands.

14. The debate stressed that technical issues and redesign of business registers occur nowadays in the broader context of efficiency and quality improvements, and adaptation to new regulations (for example, the introduction of the enterprise group unit in the business register) and revisions (for example, to the System of National Accounts). The session also identified other drivers, such as improvement in the use of administrative data and adjustment to reductions in the response burden.

15. Session 8 on "Business registers and business statistics in developing countries" was chaired by Mr. Jaime Herzog, National Department of Business Registration, Brazil. The session analysed initiatives carried out by developing countries, with or without external support, directed to improve efficiency in their business registration systems in a bid to reduce superfluous bureaucracy. Against the background of specific problems affecting the collection of business statistics in developing countries, the session focused attention on business registration information as an important tool to advance policymaking for the socio-economic development of a country. The host organization, Statistics Estonia, shared its experience in the field of statistical business registers, and explained the different steps taken over the years to develop and improve the register.

16. During session 8, the key issues and challenges of developing business registers in three important emerging Group of Twenty countries were presented, namely the cases of Brazil, China and Mexico. The presentation of an overview of the results of the 2010 Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) business register survey provided additional insights into the state of development of business registers across a range of countries and geographical areas. In view of the great diversity of business register designs, including their content and usability, ECE urged the Wiesbaden Group to initiate preparation of international guidelines on business registers. The suggestion was supported by Eurostat and some participants (Italy, the Netherlands).

Conclusion and future plans

17. The 22nd meeting of the Wiesbaden Group on Business Registers was adjourned on 30 September 2010 and the members of the Steering Group (US Census Bureau; Office for National Statistics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies

(INSEE), France; Federal Statistical Office, Germany; Statistics Estonia; Eurostat; ECE; and OECD) met afterwards to review organizational and substantive issues. The terms of reference of the Wiesbaden Group are included in the annex to the present report.

18. The next meeting of the Wiesbaden Group will take place in Washington, D.C., United States of America, in September 2012. It will be hosted and organized by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and the US Census Bureau.

Annex

Terms of reference of the Wiesbaden Group on Business Registers

Background

1. As a result of the 20th meeting in Wiesbaden, the Round Table on Business Survey Frames was renamed the "Wiesbaden Group on Business Registers", abbreviated to "Wiesbaden Group". As such, it conforms to the convention for naming United Nations city groups. The name change also reflects the changing role of business registers, which are increasingly being seen as the backbone of business statistics and as sources of statistical data in their own right, as well as an increased emphasis for the Group in defining a medium-term work programme.

2. The frequency of Wiesbaden Group meetings has been every two years, since 2008.

3. After the 22nd meeting of the Wiesbaden Group, which was hosted by Statistics Estonia, the Steering Group met on 30 September 2010 (with delegates from the United States of America, Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, France, OECD, Eurostat, ECE and Estonia) and discussed the future of the Wiesbaden Group under the following topics:

- Purpose and objectives
- Future workplan
- Road map and next meeting of the Wiesbaden Group.

Purpose and objectives of the Wiesbaden Group on Business Registers

4. The Wiesbaden Group on Business Registers is a United Nations city group. Its traditional purpose is to provide a forum for the exchange of views and experience and the conduct of joint experiments related to the development, maintenance and use of business registers to support survey sampling and other statistical activities related to the production of business statistics. The Wiesbaden Group is an informal body and participation is on a voluntary basis. Participants, however, are expected to contribute at an expert level to the programme of the meetings.

5. The conferences of the Wiesbaden Group are the platform where problems, developments, projects, ideas, concepts and aspects of the construction, maintenance and improvement of business registers are presented and discussed. By this, the Group brings together experts and responsible persons on business registers who could use the experiences of others to promote and bring forward their own ideas for the development of business registers. In particular, the Wiesbaden Group tackles forward-looking aspects and aims to identify new challenges concerning business registers.

6. The Wiesbaden Group recognizes the demand both for information on business register developments and for common guidelines and recommendations on

different issues associated with business registers. There is an array of existing and emerging issues that require expert input to develop and promulgate approaches.

7. Therefore, the Wiesbaden Group intends to produce a range of outputs for different kinds of users, including international bodies, senior managers in national statistical institutions and organizations, in the process of developing business registers. The most visible outputs of the Group, besides the conferences, are the written papers, which give an in-depth view of current business register developments. All Wiesbaden Group papers are available on the websites of the host organization and the Eurostat CIRCA website. The links to them are provided also on the ECE and OECD public websites. Additional value could be gained by circulating the summary reports produced by session conveners, the host organization and/or the Steering Group to specific international bodies.

8. Although its mandate does not emanate from a formal body, the Wiesbaden Group has expressed a desire to increase its emphasis on the provision of guidelines, recommendations and approaches for advancing issues related to business registers. The Wiesbaden Group anticipates, on the basis of its discussions and programme of work, making recommendations regarding the consideration and/or adoption of certain practices or global-level standards for business registers to the Statistical Commission.

9. The Wiesbaden Group recognizes that it has a dual role. On the one hand, many participants are expecting the exchange of experiences and ideas at an advanced level, while on the other hand the Wiesbaden Group is aware that it should be the global forum on business registers and therefore has to respect the needs and interests of countries still developing business registers. The challenge will be to find the right balance.

Workplan and major topics of the next conference(s)

10. The challenges for business registers resulting from globalization have already been highlighted in previous conferences. The next meeting will advance work on further aspects of globalization. The Steering Group has compiled a list of possible topics and issues on globalization for the next conference:

- Profiling multinational enterprise groups
- From the global to the national level: from gross domestic product to gross national income
- European/worldwide common identification number

11. At the last conference, it became obvious that cooperation with users and partners in the field of development of statistical business registers and dissemination of the results of the work are still very relevant for participants. As a result, the following topics were proposed:

- Partnership between statisticians and businesses
- Management relationships with administrative register holders
- Dissemination of the register's data

12. Improvement of data quality is the main task facing the holders of business registers. More than half of the countries that participated in the previous conference submitted reports on development and re-engineering projects for their registers. The Steering Group suggested the following topics for the next conference:

- Development and re-engineering of business registers
- Quality of business registers
- Expansion of business registers into the non-profit institution sector and measurement of services
- Use of metadata in business register processes.

13. The Steering Group advised to continue with the tradition of including a separate topic for developing countries in the conference agenda. It was suggested that the next host country should organize a seminar, at which developing as well as developed countries would have an opportunity to share their experiences in the field of business registers and register-based business statistics.

Composition and roles of the Steering Group

14. The Steering Group comprises both national statistical institutions and international organizations. Current members of the group are Eurostat, France, Germany, OECD, ECE, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America (US Bureau of Labor Statistics and US Census Bureau).

15. The Steering Group is chaired by the current host organization. The tasks of the Group are:

- To assist the host of the next meeting on matters relating to the agenda and the contributions.
- To promote and most visibly disseminate the outputs of the Wiesbaden Group.
- To actively engage the Statistical Commission and other senior management forums to promote the work of the Wiesbaden Group and seek their inputs regarding future activities.
- To develop links with other relevant international bodies, for example the World Bank, to ensure support for attendance by developing countries.
- To ensure coordination with meetings on related topics, for example the Joint Meeting of ECE or others.

Schedule/road map

2011: Joint ECE/OECD/Eurostat seminar on business registers

2012: Meeting of the Wiesbaden Group on Business Registers

United Nations E/CN.3/2011/26

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
6 December 2010

Original: English

Statistical Commission
Forty-second session
22-25 February 2011
Item 4 (f) of the provisional agenda*
Items for information: tourism statistics

Report of the United Nations World Tourism Organization on tourism statistics

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its forty-first session (see E/2010/24, chap. I.A), the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) on tourism statistics, which is submitted to the Commission for information. The report provides an overview of the work undertaken by UNWTO to support national efforts in building and strengthening national statistical capacity in implementing a system for tourism statistics. The report describes the implementation programme for tourism statistics, which consists of regional capacity-building programmes, regional workshops and other national technical assistance, and describes the timetable for the development of the International Recommendations on Tourism Statistics 2008 Compilation Guide. The Commission is requested to take note of the report.

* E/CN.3/2011/1.

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Report of the United Nations World Tourism Organization on tourism statistics

I. Introduction

1. At its thirty-ninth session, the United Nations Statistical Commission adopted the International Recommendations on Tourism Statistics 2008 (IRTS 2008) and took note of the updated version of the Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework 2008. These recommendations constitute an integrated set of concepts, definitions and classifications for the measurement of tourism activity. The Commission also requested the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the Statistics Division to develop an implementation programme, including the preparation of a compilation guide and the organization of training workshops, in collaboration with supranational and regional organizations (see E/2008/24, decision 39/106).

2. The present report outlines the response of UNWTO and the Statistics Division to the request of the Commission. The report has two parts: part one describes the regional capacity-building programmes, additional regional workshops and other national technical assistance initiatives; and part two describes the status and timetable of the development of the IRTS 2008 Compilation Guide.

II. International Recommendations on Tourism Statistics 2008: the implementation programme for 2008-2012

3. The present section summarizes different types of initiatives undertaken by UNWTO either on its own (in the case of direct technical assistance to member countries) or in collaboration with the Statistics Division and other international and regional organizations (in the case of regional workshops).

A. Regional capacity-building programmes

4. UNWTO has developed a prototype for its capacity-building programme to be applied in different regions over a five-year period, divided into segments that involve intensive and highly technical training of officials from national tourism administrations, national statistical offices, central banks and, to the extent possible, migration authorities. One country in each region is designated as the "regional hub" and serves as the regional training centre. The first regional capacity-building programmes were held in Europe and Africa with training centres in Austria and South Africa respectively. A successful programme was also held in Central America and a new one, under the leadership of the Inter-American Development Bank, will be implemented in the so-called Southern Cone countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay). Another capacity-building programme is being developed for the Asia-Pacific region, in cooperation with Australia and New Zealand.

5. The programmes are structured around two training modules: (a) technical workshops with a small number of invited countries; and (b) a regional seminar open to all countries in the region. In the interest of strengthening regional cooperation, the United Nations regional commissions and regional organizations

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such as Eurostat, the Standard International Classification of Tourism Activities, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, the Regional Tourism Organization of Southern Africa and the African Development Bank are always invited to participate.

6. The main objective of the capacity-building programme is the implementation of IRTS 2008. Specific goals include documenting available statistics and administrative records to be used for measuring tourism activity; identifying how the present measurement of resident and non-resident visitors can be improved; and fostering the macroeconomic analysis of tourism.

7. The regional capacity-building programme consists of three consecutive training workshops for a selected, small number of countries and one regional seminar. The purpose of the technical workshops is to train senior statisticians from specialized national institutes. The participants are expected to implement concrete tasks and recommendations after the first workshop and to present the work accomplished and share their experience at the second workshop.

8. UNWTO selects countries for the technical workshops based on the national commitments to tourism statistics, namely:

(a) The determination of national tourism administrations and national statistical offices to give priority to the development of their national system of tourism statistics;

(b) The work being carried out by the national tourism administration and/or national statistical office on tourism statistics and any concrete projects planned for the upcoming two years;

(c) The list of initiatives carried out by the national tourism administration, national statistical office and central bank on basic and related tourism statistics;

(d) The commitment to develop corresponding metadata using UNWTO formats.

B. Regional workshops on tourism statistics

9. In addition to the work done within the framework of such capacity-building programmes, additional regional workshops were organized by the Statistics Division and UNWTO in 2009 and 2010 for the South-East Asian countries, the States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Georgia. The objective of the workshops was to train representatives from the national statistical offices, national tourism authorities and central banks of these countries in methodological developments in tourism statistics and current country practices in compiling tourism statistics. The training workshops focused on both the interpretation of conceptual issues and options for the implementation of IRTS 2008 in country-specific circumstances and facilitated the establishment of a regional network of statisticians. Additional regional workshops are planned to support the implementation of IRTS 2008, as requested by the Commission.

10. The workshops in South-East Asia and the Commonwealth of Independent States region concluded with a number of recommendations for the participating countries to advance the work in this area; specifically, it was recommended that they should strengthen cooperation and collaboration among national statistical offices, national tourism authorities and central banks to provide a systematic

exchange of information, establish coordinated workplans and ensure the completeness and quality of data. In the recommendations, the attention of the heads of the institutes responsible for tourism statistics was drawn to the importance of establishing a regular programme of official statistical surveys for collecting good-quality data for tourism statistics and making a strong case for their funding. It was further recommended that countries should develop an in-depth understanding of the necessary classifications (International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities, Central Product Classification and Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose) and adopt them for the production and compilation of tourism statistics at the national and local levels.

C. Technical assistance missions

11. As mentioned, the regional capacity-building programmes are intended to provide national delegates with a good understanding of the work required to produce tourism statistics in line with the new international recommendations. A prototype of technical assistance missions has also been developed by UNWTO to assist countries under two basic scenarios:

(a) Case 1: Design and enhancement of the national system of tourism statistics. This is offered to countries with limited tourism statistics and usually covers inbound tourism and some characteristics of visitor flows and, rarely, information on expenditures. In these cases, UNWTO would design a programme to strengthen primary data collection.

(b) Case 2: Development of an experimental tourism satellite account. This would be offered to countries that have already established a basic system of tourism statistics that includes some observation of tourism expenditure and of the supply by tourism industries. In the best-case scenario, their national accounts would include a supply and use table. If there is sufficient information to proceed, UNWTO would propose assisting the country in setting up an experimental tourism satellite account according to the general guidelines developed by the national statistical office, as a means of further identifying major gaps or inconsistencies and recommending basic statistical improvements to overcome these constraints.

12. The case 2 scenario may also be applied to further develop the tourism satellite account for countries that have an experimental or "simulated" satellite account that presents serious inconsistencies or where the method of compilation or data generation used clearly does not comply with the established international recommendations. In such cases, UNWTO could provide assistance on how to develop the satellite account and align the statistical processes with the recommended international frameworks.

13. During the period 2008-2010, 12 countries in Europe, 14 countries in Africa and 5 countries in Central America participated in training workshops; another 14 participated in technical assistance missions. For the period 2011-2012, UNWTO plans two additional programmes for French-speaking countries in Africa and the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The Regional Tourism Organization of Southern Africa has agreed to provide another 14 African countries with ad hoc technical assistance coordinated by UNWTO.

III. Developing the International Recommendations on Tourism Statistics 2008 Compilation Guide

14. The implementation programme applied during the period 2008-2010 included supporting training material, workshops and technical assistance programmes for countries to identify the challenges of compiling basic data and indicators explained in IRTS 2008. In 2010, UNWTO prepared an updated version of the *Compendium of Tourism Statistics* for international comparability of tourism activity, including an expanded set of basic data and indicators in line with IRTS 2008. As requested by the Commission, UNWTO and the Statistics Division also started preparing the corresponding IRTS 2008 Compilation Guide, based on best practices in collecting basic tourism statistics and indicators.

15. The Compilation Guide is fully aligned with IRTS 2008 and contains additional information on certain typical compilation issues, such as setting up the system of tourism statistics and identifying the basic information framework for international comparability of tourism statistics, and checking consistency in survey data and reconciliation among data provided by different sources. The Compilation Guide will have two different formats, namely an e-document with hyperlinks to IRTS 2008 and other international standards, country case studies and complementary relevant material, which will be regularly updated and will be available in English only; and a publication in PDF format, which will be translated into other languages (except for the hyperlinks to case studies and complementary material).

16. The Compilation Guide reflects the conviction that the improvement and standardization of statistical data collection and measurement instruments in the field of tourism will lead to increasingly reliable and comparable figures in a worldwide context. In order to produce a high-quality compilation guide, a consultation process (with a timetable) was established, as shown in annex I to the present report. This process started in November 2010, with the review of the first six draft chapters. In March 2011, the full draft of the Compilation Guide will be distributed for a worldwide consultation, the results of which will be reviewed at an expert group meeting in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in May 2011. The final version is expected to be approved by the UNWTO Committee on Statistics at its meeting in January 2012.

IV. Conclusion

17. **UNWTO and the United Nations Statistics Division responded to the request of the Statistical Commission in 2008 to develop an implementation programme for tourism statistics, including the preparation of a compilation guide and the organization of training workshops. Regional capacity-building programmes for tourism statistics were developed and implemented in Africa, Central America and Europe, and additional training workshops were conducted in Asia and the Commonwealth of Independent States region. The IRTS 2008 Compilation Guide is currently being developed and will be completed by the end of 2011. The Commission may wish to take note of the present report.**

Annex

Timetable for completion of the International Recommendations on Tourism Statistics 2008 Compilation Guide

November 2010 — Consultation with a limited number of countries on the draft Compilation Guide (first six chapters)

- Content: Chapters 1 to 6 (including accommodation services only)
- Focus: General overview of comments and suggestions, and identification of case studies

December 2010 — Chapter 7 "Linking supply and demand"

- To be sent to the UNWTO Technical Advisory Board for consultation

January 2011

- Preparation of a report with countries' comments and suggestions
- Meeting of the UNWTO Committee on Statistics (27 and 28 January)
- UNWTO Technical Advisory Board provides comments on chapter 7
- General discussion on the draft Compilation Guide:
  - (a) Presentation of comments and suggestions received;
  - (b) Basic findings;
  - (c) Suggestions for updating the draft Compilation Guide;
  - (d) How to complete chapter 6.

February/March 2011

- Full revised draft of the Compilation Guide
- Provide information to the United Nations Statistical Commission on progress made
- Worldwide consultation (first week of March), including a questionnaire with specific questions on each chapter

April 2011

- Preparation of the report with the replies received (second week)
- Send the report to members of the United Nations Expert Group on Tourism Statistics

May 2011

- Expert Group meeting, tentatively in the second week of May (Brazil)

November 2011

- Circulate the Compilation Guide to the UNWTO Committee on Statistics and the and Technical Advisory Board for finalization

January 2012

- Discussion on the Compilation Guide at the meeting of the UNWTO Committee on Statistics

February 2012

- Post the finalized version of the Compilation Guide on the United Nations Statistics Division and UNWTO websites